Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan

Final Environmental Impact Report



California Department of Parks and Recreation
March 2007



Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan

Final Environmental Impact Report

SCH# 2003022116

Arnold Schwarzenegger Governor

Mike Chrisman Secretary for Resources

Ruth Coleman
Director of Parks and Recreation

Department of Parks and Recreation P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296-001

March 2007



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1 INTRODUCTION

This document presents the public and agency comments made on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report for Sonoma Coast State Beach, along with responses to significant environmental points raised in those comments. The background of public documents related to the Preliminary General Plan (Plan) and draft environmental impact report (DEIR) is summarized below.

1.1 Preliminary General Plan and DEIR

On January 6, 2004, the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) released to the general public and public agencies the Preliminary General Plan and DEIR for Sonoma Coast State Beach. In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §15087, a 45-day public review period for the DEIR was provided. The public review period ended February 20, 2004. During the public review period, comments on the environmental issue evaluated in the DEIR were received from public agencies, private groups, and individuals. In addition, comments were also received on the various components of the plan itself.

On January 8, 2007, the Department released to the general public and public agencies the new Preliminary General Plan and DEIR for Sonoma Coast State Beach (SB). This document replaces and supersedes the Preliminary General Plan/DEIR circulated in 2004. The Plan reflects the Department's dual mandates as the stewards of sensitive resources and the providers of recreational opportunities. The protection and restoration of natural and cultural resources are key components of the Plan. The Plan includes goals and guidelines aimed at biological resources and water quality protection, the preservation of scenic and cultural resources, recreation and interpretive opportunities, and facility improvements and potential construction of new developments in response to heavy and growing visitation, environmental constraints, and recent and expected near-term property acquisitions.

The Plan considers the appropriate carrying capacity of Sonoma Coast SB with regard to resource protection and the desired high-quality visitor experiences. It emphasizes the importance of long-term sustainability, the use of environmental indicators, and adaptive management practices. It is acknowledged that achieving the stated vision of the Plan would be realized incrementally, as funding becomes available, and would be completed over time through daily operational actions taken by Department staff.

The Plan includes an EIR that identifies the potential environmental effects of the Plan, consistent with requirements of the CEQA. The opportunity for public review of this Plan/DEIR was also provided during the CEQA process. A 45-day public review period for the DEIR ended on February 22, 2007. During the public review period, a number of comments on the environmental issues evaluated in the DEIR were received from public agencies, private groups, and individuals. In addition, comments were also received on the various components of the Plan itself. This document provides responses to written comments received during the 45-day public

review period. It also includes comments received on the 2004 Preliminary General Plan/DEIR, as these comments are still pertinent to management of Sonoma Coast SB to date.

1.2 PLANNING PROCESS

A thorough analysis of existing conditions and concerns was the first step undertaken during the planning process. A set of key planning issues was obtained through consultation with the public, interested organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies, via a survey, a public meeting, and a notice letter. The identified issues include appropriateness of various recreational activities, protection of sea mammals and other wildlife species, preservation of important archaeological resources, inadequacy of day-use and overnight recreational facilities, water quality improvement, grassland management, and public access to the Upper At the same time, information regarding the physical Willow Creek Watershed. characteristics of Sonoma Coast SB was collected and analyzed, including the compilation of a geographic information system (GIS) database of the natural and cultural resources present at Sonoma Coast SB with use of existing data and field survey results. The resulting data were used to help make informed decisions regarding environmental constraints to The GIS database developed for this Plan is available for continued Departmental use. An access study for the Willow Creek portion of Sonoma Coast SB was prepared as well.

The second step, which began with consideration of the broadest planning objective (e.g., Mission of the Department and Unit Classification), consisted of vision definition and implementation for Sonoma Coast SB. A vision was developed, and the existing declaration of purpose was revised to reflect the updated knowledge of the resources at Sonoma Coast SB and the understood significance and value of Sonoma Coast SB with respect to recreation and educational opportunities for the region and for the state. Planning concepts, such as goals and guidelines, management zones, potential development areas, and management plans, were developed to achieve the vision. Public input regarding the vision and the planning concepts was obtained through a survey and a public meeting and incorporated into the Plan. During the course of this planning process, the inland 3,378-acre Upper Willow Creek acquisition was completed and added to the park. This addition significantly increased the size of the park, the diversity of park resources, the recreation opportunities, as well as expanded the character of the park by increasing the significance of inland areas. The planning effort incorporated this addition and refined plan concepts, goals, and guidelines as a continuation of the initial planning process. Additional public meetings were included to provide opportunities for public input on the Willow Creek area. As a result of this significant expansion of the park, the Plan recommends reclassification of this park unit from a State Beach to a State Park.

The third major step in the planning process consisted of the environmental analysis and the consideration of alternatives. The Plan includes an EIR that identifies the potential environmental effects of the Plan, consistent with requirements of the CEQA. The Plan establishes resource-specific management guidelines in order to become a "self-mitigating" plan, designed to avoid, reduce, or minimize environmental impacts of proposed facilities to

a less-than-significant level. Based on the environmental analyses, alternatives were developed and considered for the purpose of minimizing impacts to the extent feasible. As described in the section above, the opportunity for public review of this Plan/DEIR was also provided during the CEQA process.

1.3 RESPONSE TO COMMENT DOCUMENT

This document presents public and agency comments received during the public review period of the DEIR, along with the responses to significant environmental points raised in them. The document is organized as follows:

- ► Chapter 1, "Introduction," provides a brief overview of the proposed project, describes the requirements under CEQA for responding to public comments received on the DEIR, and describes the organization of the final environmental impact report (FEIR).
- ► Chapter 2, "List of Commenters," provides a list, in table format, of all written and oral comments received on the DEIR, including comment received during the 2004 circulation.
- ► Chapter 3, "Response to Comments," provides responses to significant environmental issues raised in written and oral comments on the DEIR, received during its public review period of January 8, 2007 to February 22, 2007.
- ► Chapter 4 provides an erratum, which consists of a reproduction of portions of the Preliminary General Plan and the DEIR with revisions to text made either in response to comments or based on Department staff-directed changes that were made to date and/or revise the document.

After circulation of the 2004 Preliminary General Plan/DEIR, the Department purchased the 3,378 acre Upper Willow Creek addition. This required the Preliminary General Plan to be updated to fully include the new acquisition.

The focus of the response to comments is on the disposition of significant environmental issues that have been raised in the comments, as specified by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(b), but also includes responses to pertinent planning considerations for implementation of the proposed Plan.

No other changes to the Plan, additional to those recommended in the DEIR, are included in this document.

1.4 CONTENT OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Together, the Plan, DEIR, and this response to comments document constitute the FEIR for the Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan.

2 LIST OF COMMENTERS

This chapter provides a list of all public comments received on the Plan and DEIR during the initial public review period (January 6, 2004 through February 20, 2004) and the review period for the recirculated and updated Preliminary General Plan/EIR (January 8, 2007 through February 22, 2007) the previous document. It focuses on written comments (i.e., letters) received on the Plan and DEIR and provides a table indicating the commenter/agency that prepared written comments, the date the comment(s) were made, individual comment numbers, and the topic(s) raised in the comment (see Table 2-1).

2.1 LIST OF WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Table 2-1 indicates the letter number, commenter, date of correspondence, comment number assigned, and the comment topic assigned for each written comment received on the Plan or DEIR. The letters are numbered sequentially by date received. The suffix numbers are then used for individual comments, which are also numbered sequentially after the prefix. For example, comment 1-1 is the first comment of letter 1; comment 1-2 is the second comment of the same letter, etc.

Table 2-1 Written Comments Received on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report				
Letter	Commenter/Agency	Date	Comment Number	Topic(s)
Comm	Comments Received in the Responses to 2004 Circulation			
1	Michele Luna, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods	No date	1-1	Clarification to sections of the document that reference the services provides by the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
Depo	Timothy C. Sable, California Department of	February 17, 2004	2-1	Analysis of transportation and circulation impacts
	Transportation		2-2	Encroachment permit requirements
3	Don L. Neubacher, National Park Service	February 20, 2004	3-1	Vision and Guidelines text
4	Jane M. Hicks	July 14, 2004	4-1	Clean Water Act Section 404 permit requirements
Comments Received in the Responses to 2007 Circulation				
5	Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria	February 3, 2007	5-1	Loss and degradation of sacred tribal areas

Table 2-1 Written Comments Received on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Letter	Commenter/Agency	Date	Comment Number	Topic(s)	
6	Robert Costa and Barbara	February 9,	6-1	Traffic increase	
	Costa	2007	6-2	Security at new access points	
			6-3	Use of grazing	
7	Kate Fenton	February 20, 2007	7-1	Increased noise and traffic with poor road conditions	
			7-2	Preference for slow, careful development and trails for hikers only	
			7-3	Use of grazing	
8	David Dillman, Willow Creek Road Homeowners Group	February 20, 2007	8-1	Willow Creek Access Site Study and potential impacts	
			8-2	Guideline suggestions for road requirements	
9	Ernest Crabb, Diane Collins, and the Coleman Valley Road Preservation Society	February 20, 2007	9-1	Reasons not to develop on Coleman Valley Road	
10	Kari Taber	February 20, 2007	10-1	Reasons not to develop on Coleman Valley Road	
11	Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District	Preservation and Open 2007	11-1	Concerns about Administrative Facility and Residential Use Area	
			11-2	Conservation easements and uses	
			11-3	Preference for Proposed Project Alternative	
				11-4	Request for Carrington Ranch language revision
12	Sonoma Coast State Beach	February 21,	12-1	Trails	
		Advisory Committee	2007	12-2	Significant impacts for sample sites in Appendix G
			12-3	Cultural guideline recommendations	
			12-4	Salmonid habitat	
			12-5	Permits for climbers on Sunset Rock	

Table 2-1 Written Comments Received on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Letter	Commenter/Agency	Date	Comment Number	Topic(s)
			12-6	Use of grazing
			12-7	Climbing impacts
			12-8	Global warming
			12-9	Suggestion for text revision of Stewards description
			12-10	Term corrections
13	Deborah Koons Garcia	No date	13-1	Reasons against a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road
14	Maureen Kobbe	February 21, 2007	14-1	Traffic increase on Coleman Valley Road
			14-2	No new trails
15	Miriam Redstone	February 16, 2007	15-1	Unsafe conditions on Willow Creek Road, no horse trailers, more analysis needed
16	Michael Murphy, National Director Back Country Horseman of California, Associate Director Gold Ridge Conservation District	February 22, 2007	16-1	Willow Creek Road fire gate, riding horses on Red Hill and at Pomo Canyon
17	Carol Vellutini	arol Vellutini February 22, 2007	17-1	Protection for Sunset Rocks
			17-2	Renaming as Sonoma Coast State Park
			17-3	Use of term "playground"
			17-4	Unique park resource damage and guideline suggestions
			17-5	Use of grazing
18	Christine Taylor	No date	18-1	Traffic, safety, and litter problems on Coleman Valley Road
19	Jonathan Glass, Field Programs Director with	ograms Director with 2007	19-1	Goal NAT-1A, use of grazing
	LandPaths		19-2	Goal NAT-1A, mycological (fungi) species

Table 2-1 Written Comments Received on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Letter	Commenter/Agency	Date	Comment	Topic(s)
Letter	Commenter/Agency	Date	Number	
			19-3	Goal REC-1A, multi-use trails
			19-4	Goal EDU-1 and hiring DPR staff
			19-5	Goal TRAIL-1 and trail planning and building
			19-6	Goal ROAD-1 and logging roads
			19-7	Support of Guideline EDU-1
			19-8	Suggestion for new text for the Carrington Ranch description
20	Walter Strauss	No date	20-1	Traffic, safety, and litter problems on Coleman Valley Road
21	David Feinberg	avid Feinberg February 20, 2007	21-1	Poor road conditions on Coleman Valley Road
			21-2	Recommended Willow Creek Access Site Evaluation changes
22	Darlene LaMont	February 22, 2007	22-1	Management and development of Sonoma Coast State Beach
23	Michele Luna, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods	Stewards of the Coast and 2007	23-1	Suggestion for new Stewards text description
			23-2	New trail planning guideline recommended, bicycle safety concern
			23-3	Guideline ROAD-1H, traffic and safety issues
			23-4	Cultural guideline recommendations
			23-5	Salmonid habitat
			23-6	Climbing and Sunset Rock
			23-7	Use of grazing
			23-8	Global warming from traffic

3 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

This chapter provides a complete copy of all the written comments received on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Sonoma Coast State Beach (SB), and presents responses to significant environmental issues raised in the comments, as required by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15132. Responses to comments pertaining to the proposed General Plan are also provided.

The first section of this chapter provides master responses to environmental issues raised by multiple commenters. The second section focuses on written comments received on the Preliminary General Plan/DEIR, including letters, comment forms, and e-mail correspondence. Each letter is reproduced in its entirety to present verbatim comments, including attachments. Each letter and comments are labeled numerically, and correspond to Table 2-1. The responses to comments are also labeled numerically to correspond with each comment. The responses follow each letter.

Letters 1 through 4 were received in response to circulation of the Preliminary General Plan/DEIR circulated in 2004. The Preliminary General Plan and DEIR were subsequently revised, because of the acquisition of the Upper Willow Creek Unit property and incorporation of the lands into Sonoma Coast SB. Letters 5 through 23 were received in response to the Revised Preliminary General Plan/Recirculated DEIR for Sonoma Coast SB (including the Upper Willow Creek Unit), which was circulated in 2007.

3.1 MASTER RESPONSES

The following section contains master responses to environmental issues raised by multiple commenters for two topics: Public Access and Grazing. The intent of a master response is to provide a comprehensive response to an issue or set of interrelated issues raised by multiple commenters, so that all aspects of the issue can be addressed in a coordinated, organized manner in one location. Where appropriate, responses to individual comments on these topics are directed to the master responses.

3.1.1 MASTER RESPONSE 1 – PUBLIC ACCESS

Several commenters expressed concern regarding the impacts of increased public access to the Upper Willow Creek area, in particular on Willow Creek Road and Coleman Valley Road. Commenter concerns included increased traffic, substandard road conditions, ongoing maintenance, scenic degradation, public safety issues, emergency vehicle response time, increased noise, and air pollution from traffic, signage, and publication of access points.

The Department recognizes the importance of these concerns. The General Plan focused on utilizing existing roads to facilitate access rather than developing new roads. When access is implemented, all involved roads leading to potential access points and parking areas will be evaluated according to the goals and guidelines outlined in the plan. The Willow Creek Access Site Evaluation (Appendix G) provided an initial review of potential access points into

the Upper Willow Creek area. Potential access points were evaluated using several criteria; however, these assessments were not intended to lead to a final recommendation against or for any specific site, which is the appropriate, broad level of review for the General Plan. Any future specific development proposals will undergo subsequent CEQA review, as described in sections 1.2.2 and 1.3.5 of the General Plan.

The following outlines how the General Plan addresses the concerns regarding public access listed above.

SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESS POINTS AND TRAILS

Some commenters expressed concern about the need for further investigations or public review before implementation of access improvements to the Upper Willow Creek Unit. The approval of the General Plan does not, by itself, authorize the Department to immediately begin construction of new access point and trial facilities in the Upper Willow Creek Unit. The subsequent planning process for establishing or developing improved access routes, trails, and park facilities is outlined in the General Plan, will take time, and will involve further site-specific studies and evaluations (as identified in Goals SAFE-1, FAC-1 and Guidelines FAC-1A, FAC-1B, FAC-1J, FAC-1K, FAC-1M). The evaluations will include additional CEQA review, additional public involvement, and regulatory permit compliance. Section 3.2.2 (Site Selection Criteria) describes the process and the criteria for access point development and improvements in the Upper Willow Creek Unit, including trails.

TRAFFIC

Commenters indicated the need to further understand traffic impacts from the development of access to the Upper Willow Creek Unit. At this time the Department cannot predict traffic increases that could occur on Willow Creek Road or Coleman Valley Road as a result of future park development and visitor use, as well as other possible contributing factors from outside the park, because a specific development project has not yet been selected or proposed. Goal ROAD-1 recognizes the need to provide adequate and safe access to all park areas. Goal INLAND-1 provides for diverse and appropriate access provisions to accommodate recreational opportunities and visitor enjoyment of the inland watershed area. Guideline ROAD-1H requires road and traffic studies to evaluate safe access to any proposed Upper Willow Creek watershed access points. Furthermore, Guideline INLAND-1C recognizes the need to provide secondary access points to help reduce traffic at any particular access point. Implementation of these goals and guidelines is intended to balance the provision of access to the unit with the needs of residents to avoid or minimize the potential for adverse traffic impacts.

ROAD CONDITIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Commenters expressed concern about the poor condition of Willow Creek Road. Guidelines ROAD-1A and ROAD-1C require the preparation of a comprehensive roadway management plan and coordination with Caltrans and Sonoma County to ensure the roadways in and around Sonoma Coast SB will be maintained and improved, to the extent feasible, in order to

provide safe and convenient roadway conditions for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Implementation of these guidelines would help lead to adequate maintenance of roadways serving the Upper Willow Creek Unit.

EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS

Commenters indicated the need for adequate emergency vehicle access to the Upper Willow Creek Unit. Guideline ROAD-1G requires coordination with Caltrans and Sonoma County to assure sufficient emergency vehicle access on roadways in and around the park. Fire safety will be consistent with current practices within the Department, which specifies when fire danger rises to levels of concern, closure orders are posted, as necessary. Fire protection service for Sonoma Coast SB is provided by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Bodega Bay Fire Protection District, and the Monte Rio Fire Protection District. Please refer to the Emergency Services section on page 2-95 of the Preliminary General Plan for more detailed information. Implementation of the guideline and continued support and relationships with Caltrans and Sonoma County would lead to adequate emergency vehicle access.

AIR QUALITY AND NOISE

Commenters sought additional information about air quality and noise effects of providing access to the Upper Willow Creek Unit. Guidelines FAC-1L and FAC-1N require consultation with the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District and noise studies to determine impacts of the development of new facilities. Furthermore, air quality and noise impacts for projects recommended in the General Plan will be evaluated during project-specific CEQA review in the future as described in section 1.2.2 and 1.3.5 in the General Plan. Implementation of these guidelines would ensure that potential air and noise effects of specific improvements are addressed and avoided or minimized.

SCENIC DEGRADATION

The potential degradation of the scenic qualities of the area from development of access to and addition of facilities in the Upper Willow Creek Unit was of concern to commenters. Guideline FAC-1C requires the integration of the park's positive aesthetic features into the design of new facilities. Goal INLAND-3 calls for the preservation of the natural beauty of the inland viewshed for enjoyment of visitors. Guideline INLAND-3A requires appropriate visual screening of new facilities that are visible from roadways and trails. Guideline TRAIL-1E calls for the exploration of strategies to provide access to facilities, such as trails, vistas, and campsites in balance with the scenic character of the park. Furthermore, aesthetic impacts for projects recommended in the General Plan will be evaluated during project-specific CEQA review in the future as described in section 1.2.2 and 1.3.5 in the General Plan. Implementation of these goals and guidelines are intended to project the scenic quality of the park.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Commenters were concerned about public safety related to the additional visitors to the Upper Willow Creek Unit. Guideline REC-1D requires appropriate studies and evaluations to be conducted to maintain and enhance safe access to areas within the Sonoma Coast SB. Guideline ROAD-1C requires coordination with Caltrans and Sonoma County to ensure roads in and around Sonoma Coast SB are improved, consistent with resource management goals and guidelines. Guideline ROAD-1H requires road and traffic studies to evaluate safe access to any proposed Upper Willow Creek watershed access points. Guideline SAFE-1A requires coordination with local communities, local districts and agencies, and State agencies to provide a unified delivery of emergency services. Guidelines FAC-1J and FAC-1K require the consideration of public safety personnel needs and assessment of the ability to provide adequate public safety when developing new facilities. These guidelines demonstrate the high priority of public safety in the Department's decisions about access to the Upper Willow Creek Unit. Their implementation would help provide adequate public safety in whatever access approach is pursued.

SIGNAGE

Guideline ROAD-1B requires an evaluation of signing to determine adequacy for directing visitors in and around Sonoma Coast SB. Furthermore, the guideline states that signs be installed to bring visitors' attention to the primary destinations and attractions, to distinguish between designated parking areas and scenic pull-outs, and to provide appropriate warnings of potential hazards.

PUBLICATION OF ACCESS POINTS

Once a final affirmative determination is made on a project and the development is complete, the Department will include the facility in maps and brochures, as is standard throughout the State Park System. The Department of Parks and Recreation does not generally advertise specific park access points and parking lots. Access and parking information is included on park maps and brochures.

3.1.2 MASTER RESPONSE 2 – GRAZING

Several commenters expressed support for livestock grazing on the Sonoma Coast SB as a management tool for weed control and fire suppression. Commenters also cite the current and historic agricultural uses of Sonoma Coast SB and adjacent properties, including livestock grazing. The Department does not intend to use modern agricultural techniques, such as livestock grazing, for resource management or interpretive purposes at Sonoma Coast State Beach. The Department's policy on grazing is clear with respect to the possible exceptions.

As stated policy in the Department of Parks and Recreation Operations Manual (DOM Section's 0317.2.4 and 0317.2.4.1), livestock grazing is an inappropriate use of parkland resources except under certain circumstances where a core park purpose is served. Please

refer to Section 4.6.2, pages 4-7 and 4-8 of the General Plan/DEIR where these core purposes are outlined. They do not authorize grazing for fuel reduction purposes. As the commenter mentions, prescriptive burning can be used by the Department to effectively manage fuel loads that are consistent with resource management objectives.

The Department's Livestock Grazing Policy read as follows:

0317.2.4 Livestock Grazing

Since 1957, after statewide review by the State Park and Recreation Commission, livestock grazing has been considered incompatible with park purposes, including natural resource protection and providing a meaningful outdoor recreational experience. Protecting and restoring natural processes is at the core of the State Park System's natural resource management. Livestock grazing is an artificial process impacting physical and biological resources. Grazing also impacts recreational opportunities. However, there are occasions when livestock grazing may be appropriate when it is clearly shown that a core park purpose is significantly served, e.g., natural resource restoration and interpretation (see State Park and Recreation Commission Policy II-6). In addition, short-term grazing may be appropriate to consummate land acquisition.

0317.2.4.1 Livestock Grazing Policy

It is the policy of the Department of Parks and Recreation that livestock grazing is an inappropriate use of the parkland resources except under certain circumstances where a core park purpose is served. Due to the potential for inconsistent application of the Department's Livestock Grazing Policy and uncoordinated scientific monitoring, the Chief of the Natural Resources Division and appropriate Field Division Chief will approve any grazing contracts, leases or agreements deemed beneficial to the State Park System prior to execution.

Livestock grazing may be permitted under the following circumstances:

- a. When directly contributing to historic interpretation approved in a unit's General Plan;
- b. When necessary for a specific natural resource restoration purpose, which normally does not include fuels reduction or an alternative to extirpated ungulate grazing; or
- c. When it is a necessary component to an acquisition agreement, including scaled-down grazing to improve natural resources.

Compliance with this policy would require one or more of these purposes to be met before grazing could be initiated within Sonoma Coast SB.

As referenced by the policy statement above, the State Park and Recreation Commission has established an additional policy pertaining to grazing and agricultural leasing on State Park lands (see Policy II-6 below).

State Park and Recreation Commission – Policy II-6

AGRICULTURAL LEASING (Amended 5-4-94)

Generally, grazing or agricultural leasing is considered incompatible in units of the State Park System. However, a general plan may include a grazing or agricultural activity that is found to be fundamental to enhancement of the visitor experience or resource values, such as historic interpretation or resource management.

The Director may, with the concurrence of the Commission, permit grazing or agricultural where it is for the benefit of the unit and consistent with its classification. The Director shall carefully weigh the environmental consequences of grazing or other agricultural leases on the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of the unit.

3.2 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE GENERAL PLAN/DEIR

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Sonoma Coast General Plan Feedba MORTHERN SERVICE CENTER
Michele Luna
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Page 2-84 & 2-85 Visitor Center

The Jenner Visitor Center is staffed year-round. During the off-season it is staffed on weekends and during the busy season 3-5 days a week. Upgrading of the interpretive displays is a priority for the Visitor Center.

Page 2-101

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods is the nonprofit
cooperating association that works under contract in
partnership with the State Parks in the Russian River
Sector supporting interpretive volunteer programs, resource
management projects and advocating for state park needs.
Programs on Sonoma coast include Seal Watch, Whale Watch,
tidepool and watershed education programs, the Willow Creek
Citizen Action Team and staffing the visitor Center in
Jenner.

Page 2-104

Visitor Center

The Jenner Visitor Center is staffed year round. During the off-season it is staffed on weekends and during the busy season 3-5 days a week.

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Marine Mammals

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods supports the Seal Watch program, whereby volunteers are trained to provide education and protection for the harbor seal colony from March through August during their annual pupping season when they are most vulnerable.

Tidepools

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, the nonprofit organization that works under contract with the Department supports two tidepool education programs. The tidepool education program provides education for school groups who visit this fragile marine ecosystem impressing upon them the importance of stewardship. The tidepool roving naturalist program accomplishes the same goals with park

1-1

visitors by staffing popular tidepool beaches during low tides on the weekends.

Watershed Protection and Restoration
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods supports restoration and education in the Willow Creek watershed. They secured grant funding to work in partnership with the Department and other technical advisory partners to develop a watershed plan and implement restoration efforts to restore the fishery. They also developed and support a watershed education program with middle and high school students who conduct field studies in the watershed.

1-1 (Cont)

Page 3-16
Interpretation and Education
Insert a section that addresses the need for a Docent
Training Program.
Page 3-35
Water Quality
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods supports the Willow
Creek Citizen Action Team, volunteers who monitor the
Willow Creek watershed for water quality.

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FEB 1 8 2004
NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Letter 1: Michele Luna, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

No Date

1-1 The commenter suggests clarifications to sections of the document that reference the services provided by the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods. The comment is noted. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for revised text regarding the description of the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

111 GRAND AVENUE P. O. BOX 23660 OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660 PHONE (510) 286-5505 FAX (510) 286-5513 TTY (800) 735-2929

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Flex your power! Be energy efficient!

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

February 17, 2004

SON-1-20.1 SON001221 SCH# 2003022116

Mr. Wayne Woodroof California Department of Parks and Recreation Northern Service Center One Capitol Mall, Suite 500 Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Woodroof:

Sonoma Coast State Beach General Plan - Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Thank you for continuing to include the California Department of Transportation (Department) in the environmental review process for the proposed general plan. We have reviewed DEIR and have the following comments to offer:

- 1. The DEIR includes a program-level analysis of transportation and circulation impacts that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. Once specific projects have been identified in the Sonoma Coast State Beach, additional project-specific analysis of potential impacts to State Routes 1 and 116 should be submitted for our review.
- 2. Please be advised that any work or traffic control within the State Route 1 or State Route 116 right-of-way (ROW) will require an encroachment permit from the Department. To apply for an encroachment permit, submit a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, and five (5) sets of plans (in metric units) which clearly indicate State ROW to the following address:

2-1

2-2

Mr. Sean Nozzari, District Office Chief Office of Permits California Department of Transportation, District 04 P. O. Box 23660 Oakland, Ca 94623-0660 Mr. Wayne Woodroof/ California Department of Parks and Recreation February 17, 2004 Page 2

Should you require further information or have any questions regarding this letter, please call Maija Cottle of my staff at (510) 286-5737.

Sincerely,

TIMOTHY C. SABLE District Branch Chief

IGR/CEQA

c: State Clearinghouse

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FEB 2 5 2004

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Letter 2: Timothy C. Sable, California Department of Transportation February 17, 2004

- 2-1 The commenter notes that the DEIR includes a program-level analysis of transportation and circulation impacts that would result from implementation of the General Plan. The commenter suggests that project-specific analysis of potential impacts to State Routes 1 and 116 be submitted to the California Department of Transportation (DOT) once specific projects have been identified. The Department will coordinate with Caltrans when specific access improvements affecting state routes are proposed for review.
- 2-2 The commenter advises that any work or traffic control within the State Route 1 or 116 right-of-ways will require an encroachment permit from Caltrans. The commenter outlines the application procedure. The Department will pursue encroachment permits, whenever needed, in compliance with Caltrans requirements. This comment is noted, and no further response is necessary.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Point Reves National Seashore

Point Reyes National Seashore Point Reyes, California 94956

L7617

February 20, 2004

RECEIVED

FEB 2 7 2004

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Mr. Wayne Woodroof
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Northern Service Center
One Capital Mall, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Sonoma Coast State Beach, Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR

Dear Mr. Woodroof:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Sonoma Coast State Beach Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR. Point Reyes National Seashore and Sonoma Coast State Beach share many of the natural, cultural, scenic and recreational resources unique to the Central California coast. Our parks are part of a cluster of recreation destinations that provide respite for residents of San Francisco Bay Area and beyond.

The Preliminary General Plan provides laudable programmatic goals and protections for the important resources and recreational opportunities of Sonoma Coast State Beach. The Draft Guidelines ably set the parameters within which site-specific plans can be incrementally developed while assuring that the integrity of the park-wide vision is maintained. That Park Vision, presented on page 3-3, will provide for the continued enjoyment and protection of this important State resource. Perhaps the Vision and the Guidelines would benefit by replacing caveats such as "to the greatest extent feasible" with phasing that defines the reasonable limitations that are intended. The Guidelines in particular would benefit from this rewording as the future application of the Guidelines is essential to the assurance that all potential adverse impacts of the Preliminary General Plan would be less than significant.

We look forward to the publication of the final General Plan and EIR and congratulate the Department of Parks and Recreation on the development of a planning framework for the Sonoma Coast State Beach that emphasizes the long-range protection of our valuable coastal resources.

3-1

Page 2

Thank you again, for this opportunity to provide our comments.

Sincerely,

Mullula II Don L. Neubacher

Superintendent

RECEIVED

FEB 2 7 2004

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Letter 3: Don L. Neubacher, National Park Service

February 20, 2004

3-1 The commenter notes that the General Plan provides laudable programmatic goals and protections for the important resources and recreational opportunities of Sonoma Coast SB, and notes that the guidelines ably set parameters within which site-specific plans can be incrementally developed while assuring that the integrity of the park-wide vision is maintained. The commenter suggests that the Park Vision presented on page 3-3 be reworded to replace caveats such as "to the greatest extent feasible" with phrasing that defines the reasonable limitations that are intended. The caveat phrase has been removed from the Park Vision statement as a part of the 2007 update and completion of the Preliminary General Plan. No further response is necessary.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
333 MARKET STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94105-2197

JIII_ 1 4 2004

Regulatory Branch

SUBJECT: File Number 28933N

Mr. Wayne Woodroof California Department of Parks and Recreation One Capital Mall, Suite 500 Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Woodroof:

This letter is in response to the Sonoma Coast State Beach Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report concerning future development and maintenance at Sonoma Coast State Beach, which extends approximately 19 miles from Bodega Head in the vicinity of Bodega Bay to beyond Vista Trail, located 4 miles north of Jenner in Sonoma County, California.

All proposed work and/or structures extending bayward or seaward of the line on shore reached by: (1) mean high water (MHW) in tidal waters, or (2) ordinary high water in non-tidal waters designated as navigable waters of the United States, must be authorized by the Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. Section 403). Additionally, all work and structures proposed in unfilled portions of the interior of diked areas below former MHW must be authorized under Section 10 of the same statute.

All proposed discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States must be authorized by the Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 U.S.C. Section 1344). Waters of the United States generally include tidal waters, lakes, ponds, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), and wetlands.

Future work may be within our jurisdiction and a permit may be required. Application for Corps authorization should be made to this office using the application form in the enclosed pamphlet. To avoid delays it is essential that you enter the file number at the top of this letter into Item No. 1. The application must include plans showing the location, extent and character of the proposed activity, prepared in accordance with the requirements contained in this pamphlet. You should note, in planning your work, that upon receipt of a properly completed application and plans, it may be necessary to advertise the proposed work by issuing a public notice for a period of 30 days.

If an individual permit is required, it will be necessary for you to demonstrate to the Corps that your proposed fill is necessary because there are no practicable alternatives, as outlined in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines. A copy is enclosed to aid you in preparation of this alternative analysis.

4-1

However, our nationwide or regional permits have already authorized certain activities provided specified conditions are met. Your completed application will enable us to determine whether your activity is already authorized. You are advised to refrain from commencement of your proposed activity until a determination has been made that an existing permit covers it. Commencement of work before you received our notification may be interpreted as a violation of our regulations.

4-1 (Cont)

If you have any questions, please call Bryan Matsumoto of our Regulatory Branch at telephone 415-977-8476. All correspondence should reference the file number at the head of this letter.

Sincerely,

Jane M. Hicks

Chief, North Section

Enclosure

Letter 4: Jane M. Hicks

July 14, 2004

4-1 The commenter advises that all discharges of dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States must be authorized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Clean Water Act Section 404 and that permits, either individual or nationwide, may be required. The commenter outlines the application procedure. The Department will seek Section 404 authorization, whenever required for specific development projects.



Sacred Sites Protection Committee P.O. Box 14428 Santa Rosa, CA 95402 707-566-2288

February 3, 2007

Rec. by DPR FEB 07 2007

To:

Dave Keck

California Department of Parks and Recreation

Planning Division P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296

RE:

Sonoma Coast State Beaches DEIR

SCH # 2003022116

The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) appreciate the opportunity to provide the following written comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

In recent years, the weather and development in this area has destroyed many areas Tribal members consider sacred and or important to the cultural heritage of our members. We have watched our ancient cemeteries destroyed or covered by parking lots. We have watched our ancient village areas which may hold clues to our ancient way of life destroyed. Sacred objects used in the practice of our religion have been systematically removed from our culture both intentionally and unintentionally. We have watched the plants and animals we used for food, medicine and religious ceremonies destroyed without consideration of their importance to our culture and traditions. We continue to watch others make decisions about what is important to us and what we would like to preserve for our children.

Some of the planned activities listed in the EIR are proposed in areas known to contain cemeteries, ceremonial areas and village sites. The areas have the potential to contain many other culturally important sites because of the proximity to current and ancient fresh water sources and food supply. In the tradition of the Tribe, sacred and ceremonial sites are not listed in the State database. We want to begin a process to discuss these with you as your projects become clearer and have more definition.

We request the State Parks embrace the spirit of current laws and actively work with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to preserve our cultural resources through implementation of the following as mitigation to the potential impacts that would be caused by project activities to the cultural resources known to exist and those cultural resources yet to be uncovered.

5-1

- We request State Parks meet with FIGR to develop treatment and preservation plans to mitigate human and other environmental impacts on the known and unknown cultural resources in the study area.
- We request State Parks and FIGR agree to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide Native American monitoring services by FIGR at future projects. A FIGR monitor should be present during all soil excavation and disturbance in sensitive areas, working under a written treatment plan signed by both parties for that specific project.
- We request State Parks work with FIGR on the development of a systematic and thorough plan to evaluate areas impacted by development listed for this EIR.
- 4. We request a regular meeting schedule, (perhaps quarterly) with State Parks and FIGR to review the condition of known resources, discuss new projects listed in the EIR and their impact on Native American cultural resources. Topics may also include interpretive displays and events.

We look forward to working with the State Parks for the improvements to the Sonoma Coast Parks area to preserve and protect the cultural resources impacted by this project. We believe the implementation of these measures will be the first steps toward establishing a model program for cooperation between our two government agencies.

Respectfully,

Nick Tipon

For the Sacred Sites Protection Committee

Cc: Tribal Council

5-1 (Cont)

Letter 5: Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria

February 3, 2007

5-1 The commenter expresses concern about the cumulative loss and degradation of areas tribal members consider sacred or of importance to the tribe's cultural heritage and concerns about the loss of plants and animals important to the tribe. Some of the activities listed in the General Plan are in areas known to contain cemeteries. ceremonial areas, and village sites. The tribe requests that State Parks work with the tribe to preserve the cultural resources and lists four specific actions they would like to see implemented. The Department will coordinate closely with the tribe regarding any project that may affect culturally important lands or resources. The Department has secured funding for an initial cultural assessment of the Willow Creek area. An interagency agreement for Sonoma State University to perform the assessment is being completed. It is anticipated that once the agreement is completed, this cultural resource assessment work can begin. This assessment intends to identify not only significant native sites, but other historical/culturally significant sites as well. The Department welcomes representatives from the local native groups to be involved in this process. Upon completion of the General Plan, the Department intends to form a District Citizen Advisory group that will provide advice and counsel on issues that affect the local parks. The Department recognizes that it would be beneficial to have a representative from the Graton Rancheria involved in that group. Protection of the State's cultural heritage is a critical aspect of the Mission Statement of the Department of Parks and Recreation. The Department looks forward to developing cooperative working relationships with local native groups to help the Department serve the cultural heritage aspects of its mission.

RECEIVED

February 9, 2007

California Department of Parks and Recreation Planning Division PO Box 942896 Sacramento, Ca 94296-0001 FEB 1 5 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Attention: Dave Keck, General Plan Section

RE: Access to Sonoma Coast State Beach Park via Upper Willow Creek Road

As residents of Willow Creek Road the following are some of our very valid concerns relative to the proposed subject access and parking lot.

Visitors: At the present time, LandPaths has issued more than six hundred permits for access to Willow Creek Watershed and anticipate they will have over one thousand permits by the end of the year. Also, the Sonoma Coast State Beach Park draws more than two million visitors each year. Should a small percentage decide to visit the new access at Upper Willow Creek Road the increase in traffic and congestion created would be beyond comprehension.

Willow Creek Road: A single lane, narrow (10-16' wide), sub-standard road 2.0 miles long from Coleman Valley Road to the existing gate. A standard road width is 24' providing one lane in each direction. A private developer would be required to make major improvements to the existing road with a similar project that would increase traffic levels to the same level as the proposed Park access will. The serviceability of the switch back area near the existing gate is questionable and should be evaluated by an engineering company as MRC feels it is in poor condition and may fail with an increase in traffic.

6-1

Emergency Vehicle Access: Will most certainly be compromised in that delayed response times due to traffic congestion will prevent first responders from reaching the scene of emergencies in a reasonable time consistent with applicable standards in place today. At present when two vehicles meet (most with local knowledge of the road) they can pass with caution. Introduce a truck and worse yet, a truck with a trailer and drivers not familiar with the road and the situation becomes a design for disaster.

Security and Supervision: Access points to the Park must be supervised together with some form of law enforcement. The access point at Freezeout is within reasonable response from the Rangers primary area of responsibility. Upper Willow Creek Road (UWCR) is not within a reasonable response time from the coast area and would not have supervision. Additional staffing most likely will not occur due to fiscal limitations. There is a good chance staffing will be reduced, leaving large areas unprotected and without basic supervision to outlying boundaries and limitations to visitors. LandPaths orientation is clearly not enough, park personnel must be available for personal contact as a preventative prior to problems becoming out of control.

6-2

6-3

Fire Danger: Consistent with State Parks policies of no grazing and allowing slash to accumulate the risk of a serious devastating fire will no doubt increase each year. With flashy fuel loads, up-slope topography, afternoon up-canyon winds, high temperatures, low humidity and the introduction of non-supervised visitors, there is the potential of creating a major fire. Grazing must be reintroduced with serious consideration to prescriptive burning to mitigate a very serious fire problem.

We believe the above issues represent a significant impact to the health, safety and welfare of the residents of UWCR as well as the natural resources.

Respectfully,

Robert R. Costa

Barbara E. Costa

17650 Willow Creek Road Occidental, California 95465

707.874.9065

Email: bcosta@attwb.net

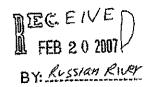
Letter 6: Robert Costa and Barbara Costa

February 9, 2007

- 6-1 The commenters express concerns about increased traffic and congestion on Willow Creek Road potentially resulting from increased use of the area. Specific concerns include the need for road improvements to handle increased traffic and provide for adequate emergency response times. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 Public Access.
- 6-2 The commenters are concerned about adequate supervision and security at new access points to the park and response times by law enforcement officers to those points, specifically Willow Creek Road. The Department has identified in the General Plan that there is a need for security for the Upper Willow Creek Acquisition. Guideline INLAND-11 recommends that consideration be given to placing a Stateowned park staff residence in the vicinity of Upper Willow Creek to provide park security and surveillance for that area. Park security is provided by the park rangers, Sonoma County Sheriff's Office and the California Highway Patrol.
- 6-3 The commenters suggest the use of grazing as a management tool to reduce fire danger. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 2 Grazing.

February 20, 2007

California Department of Parks & Recreation Russian River District P.O. Box 123 Duncans Mills, CA 95430



Re: General Plan for Willow Creek

I am submitting the following comments into the public record regarding the planning process for the Willow Creek acquisition.

Road/Access Impacts: As a homeowner and resident for 31 years at 29001 Willow Creek Road, in the lower watershed near Jenner, and an original member of the Sonoma Coast State Beach Citizens' Advisory Committee since 1983, I am primarily concerned about the impact of increased traffic on the road as it would affect residents as well as recreational users such as cyclists and hikers. Between Highway 1 and the first gate, the road is in extremely deteriorated condition. There is a significant slide very close to my home, 2 mile from the highway, which I documented with photographs in 1993 when it first began sinking; the County Dept. of Public Works did major work on it last year. The road is narrow and already accommodates heavy vehicles from the State Parks maintenance yard, visitors to the two State Parks campgrounds in Willow Creek as well as Pomo Canyon trail, a portion of the extremely high numbers of visitors to the beaches as well many local cyclists, dog walkers etc. It is frightening to think of the noise and traffic level were it to increase at all. As far as I am concerned it is already at peak capacity.

The opposition by many upper Willow Creek Road and Coleman Valley Road residents to any additional access in their neighborhoods alarms me. They state that the overused, narrow, decaying roads can't handle any increased public access, although I can't imagine that conditions are worse than the lower road, and that the problems with illegal use have been extensive. This second situation has decreased since the gating off of the road, and is really a separate issue to legal Park access. They repeatedly state that the increased access should be through the lower watershed, and that Pomo Canyon campground should be the site of horse trailer parking. This in particular causes alarm because during the many months that the Advisory Committee originally spent developing the Interim Plan for the first Willow Creek acquisition, we thoroughly discussed and decided against equestrian use in the Park altogether. Now it has somehow, through LandPaths permits, been "grandfathered" in. However, putting horse trailer parking in Pomo would be entirely inappropriate to this carefully designed, exquisite campground. It seems especially illogical that access to the upper watershed should be through the lower watershed!

With a park of this size as many access points as possible need to be in place to lessen the impacts on any one area. The upper watershed residents need to realize that this is now public land, and to route access through the other end is not a solution. We upper and lower Willow Creek watershed neighbors agree that the road is not designed for, and cannot handle, a lot of increased public access. The road is charming and I deeply hope that it will never be "improved," in the sense of widened, to accommodate the masses. I believe that Freezeout Road is the best spot for equestrian access, partly because that is where the necessary posts and bunkers have already been installed. The County itself has had a sign in place at the corner of Willow Creek Road and Highway 1 for many years saying that the road is not recommended for RV traffic.

7-1 (Cont)

Preservation vs. Recreation: Access issues for me are based in the strong hope that changes will start slowly, letting the land recover; and then making it a special place, selectively and carefully planned with some work required in its use. The special interest groups (mountain bikes, hikers and equestrians) that are highly organized and represented, and very eager to get in, need to realize that development needs to proceed slowly and thoughtfully. Trail planners also need to be aware that hikers should have most trails reserved for them.

7-2

Grazing: Despite the fact that Parks policy is not to allow grazing, it is in fact allowed in many Parks, and its potential benefits should continue to be studied. And despite current theory, grazing does in fact reduce fire danger, and causes wildflowers to flourish where the hooves indent the earth. Thus I strongly support the Baxman family grazing lease (for at least 5 years at a time). A ranch management plan could be worked out in cooperation with other agencies such as Gold Ridge Resource Conservation and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Grazing has great historical and cultural value in keeping with Parks' mission statement.

7-3

Sincerely,

Kate Fenton

Letter 7: Kate Fenton

February 20, 2007

- 7-1 The commenter is concerned about increased noise and traffic levels on lower Willow Creek Road, which already has poor road conditions. The commenter suggests that many access points are needed to lessen the impacts on any one area. The commenter suggests Freezeout Road as the best spot for equestrian access. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 Public Access.
- 7-2 The commenter prefers slow, carefully planned, and environmentally thoughtful development of access routes rather than fast development that would satisfy the special interest groups (mountain bikers, hikers, and equestrians). The commenter also suggests including trails reserved for hikers only. The comment is noted. The approval of the General Plan does not authorize the Department to immediately begin construction of new facilities. The subsequent planning process for establishing or developing improved access routes, trails, park facilities, etc. will take time and involve further site-specific studies and evaluations (as identified in Goals SAFE-1, FAC-1 and Guidelines FAC-1A, FAC-1B, FAC-1J, FAC-1K, FAC-1M), CEQA analysis and public review, and regulatory permit compliance. Section 3.2.2 Site Selection Criteria describes the process and the criteria for development and improvements, which includes trails. Please also refer to Master Response 1 Public Access.
- 7-3 The commenter supports the use of grazing as a management tool to reduce fire danger and suggests the creation of a ranch management plan. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 2 Grazing.

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FEB 2 2 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE

Willow Creek Road
Homeowners' Group
c/o David Dillman
P. O. Box 403
Occidental, Ca. 95465
Feb. 20, 2007

California Dept. of Parks and Recreation Planning Division Dave Keck: Supervisor, General Plan Section P. O. Box 942896 Sacramento, Ca. 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Keck,

As homeowners on upper Willow Creek Road and immediate neighbors to the State Park, our Group appreciates this opportunity to give public comment regarding the Sonoma Coast State Beach Preliminary General Plan & Draft Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan").

The Willow Creek Addition to the Sonoma Coast State Beach is truly a spectacular acquisition. We are excited at the possibility of State Parks both being a steward of this land and also providing trail systems for the public to enjoy the pristine beauty of this coastal area.

Our Group has worked closely with State Parks over the past year and a half regarding this new Willow Creek Addition generally and the upper Willow Creek area in particular. We have strong views regarding public safety issues and we thank State Parks for their ongoing openness in dialoguing with us about them. We hope what we consider to be a good, productive working relationship can continue for many years to come.

Referring to the Plan itself, we have specific recommendations which we strongly feel need to be incorporated into the Park Plan (Chapter 3) and the Environmental Analysis (Chapter 4) to fully ensure that public safety is protected. Our requests for written modifications to the Plan and Environmental Analysis are itemized in the enclosed attachment.

The remainder of this letter focuses more specifically on public access considerations discussed in Appendix G - the Willow Creek Access Site Evaluation.

At some point in the future, State Parks will move beyond the planning concepts of this Plan toward selected project developments. Regarding upper Willow Creek Road, it is important from our point of view for State Parks to make development decisions that are not just conceptual in nature, but pragmatic, workable and safe.

More specifically, in the section on Upper Willow Creek Road within Appendix G - Sites A, B and C are identified as possible "secondary" access sites for public parking generally and equestrian parking in particular. These site determinations were made by EDAW, based upon only a single day in the field (May 10, 2006). This is a wholly inadequate basis upon which to understand the degree and complexity of traffic, fire, physical safety and visual problems Sites A, B and C pose.

Upper Willow Creek Road is a substandard road. With its numerous blind curves, steep grades, single lanes, tight embankments, cliff-like dropoffs, residential neighborhoods and pedestrian traffic - it is both historically and currently a dangerous road for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate.

Why create a "secondary" parking lot further down this road that would exponentially increase traffic problems and related risks to the public? And given all the public and personal testimony State Parks has received regarding the dangers horse trailers pose to the public and themselves on this road, how can EDAW state in its report that equestrian trailer parking on Upper Willow Creek Road "could be accommodated"?

These possible "secondary" parking lots are located in an area of the State Park that has high fire danger. High grasslands and dead tan oaks surround these sites. Coupled with the fact that some of the public drive off-road vehicles on these sites, make campfires, smoke cigarettes, etc. - bringing vehicles down to this area fuels a disaster waiting to happen. Local authorities recognize this danger: In the fall of 2005, the Sonoma County Dept. of Transportation and Public Works built a temporary fire gate on Upper Willow Creek Road, purposely preventing vehicular access to these "secondary" sites for fire prevention purposes.

It is also precisely in this area of possible parking lot development that people historically party, drink alcohol and shoot guns. Allowing people to drive their cars down to this area is an invitation for some of the public to put others of the public in serious danger.

8-1 (Cont) Shifting gears, a pertinent question that underlies all of this discussion is what kind of State Park access currently exists on upper Willow Creek Road. Does public access exist? Are there parking sites available for the public to access the Park? What is working and what is problematic?

In fact, upper Willow Creek Road already serves as a public access route to State Park trails and land. There is no need to build any kind of "secondary" parking area as discussed in Appendix G. Public allowed parking already exists in two areas just above the temporary fire gate at the State Parks boundary. The current number of parking places actually exceeds those proposed in the Plan, without the safety problems and visual impacts - new fencing, lot development and vehicular presence - a newly configured site would bring. Preservation of the pristine nature of this property - the views, the quiet, the unspoiled landscape and animal life - is of incalculable worth for a public to come out and enjoy.

We know that many State Parks have access roads similar to upper Willow Creek Road, but they are roads that most of the public does not even know about. These roads can be driven right up to State Parks, but there are no signs, maps, web sites or other communication sources to let the public know such roads exist. Strong precedent therefore exists for a road like upper Willow Creek Road to be used by locals and other members of the public who know about it, without its being formalized and advertised as an authorized park access route.

This type of limited road useage is a compromise that would have our support. However, public safety considerations make unacceptable any State Parks plan either to develop parking at Site A, B or C, or to use upper Willow Creek Road as a designated, official access point to the Park.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these important matters.

David Dillman, for the Willow Creek Road

Homeowners' Group

cc: Ruth Coleman Todd Timms Craig Anderson 8-1 (Cont) We find the General Plan and Draft EIR to be commendably comprehensive; however, we wish to note some required improvements to assure the authors' intent of protecting public safety is met.

Comments on the Preliminary General Plan:

- 1. ROAD-1F: This Guideline does not identify the requirements for new road or parking lots, yet the EIR Impact TRANS section mentions only this Guideline when stating that such new facilities will have no significant impact. ROAD-1F must therefore include all the required guidelines to guarantee insignificant impact including: Safe-1A (as modified below), the new section SAFE-1E below and FAC-1B. Another option would be for Impact TRANS of the EIR to reference these Guidelines and require they be followed (FAC-1B, SAFE 1A and 1E). Currently it does not.
- 2. SAFE-1A: A sentence needs to be added to make it clear that new facilities shall not be constructed where substandard road conditions exist, including sharp turns, steep grades, narrow pavement and a high probability of closure due to slides or other natural hazards.
- 3. SAFE-1E: There is no mention of fire safety in the proposed General Plan or EIR. An additional Guideline is thus required to address fire safety. A suggested wording is: Protect visitors and residences from fire by locating facilities that concentrate visitors and necessitate vehicle access in areas that are naturally highly fire resistant and provide safe road access for large emergency vehicles.
- 4. FAC-1B: This Guideline references the very useful table 3-1, by stating that "new development of facilities shall **consider** the site selection criteria of table 3-1. In this application, **consider** is a weak word which must be replaced by a strong word such as **conform** or **meet**. Without this change it is not legitimate for the EIR to state that meeting Guideline FAC 1B mitigates impact.

Comments on the EIR:

Because the EIR relies on meeting the appropriate General plan guidelines, it is critical that the referencing of Guidelines be complete. We note the following critical additions.

- 1. Impact GEO: the modified SAFE-1A above should be included to prevent facilities from being developed that are accessed by roads subject to failure.
- 2. Impact TRANS: FAC-1B, SAFE-1A and SAFE-1E need to be referenced. See ROAD-1F discussion above for rationale.
- 3. Impact: the modified Guideline SAFE-1A and new SAFE-1E must be referenced to avoid impacts related to fire and road safety.

Letter 8: David Dillman, Willow Creek Road Homeowners' Group February 20, 2007

- 8-1 The commenters are concerned about making upper Willow Creek Road a secondary access site for public parking, including equestrian parking, because they feel the road is a "substandard road." The homeowners are concerned that the Willow Creek Access Site Evaluation does not satisfactorily address the increased traffic, fire safety, physical safety, and visual quality impacts that would occur on the road. The commenters feel the current access conditions on upper Willow Creek Road are adequate and would support the use of the road if it is used informally and if it is unadvertised. The comment is noted and the Department recognizes that the public can access the park via upper Willow Creek Road by foot, bicycle, or horse. Gated access restricts private vehicles, but allows access for operational and emergency purposes. Currently there is no State-owned, designated parking in this vicinity to support current visitor use. Visitors either park along the County road or walk from nearby residences and other private properties. Guideline INLAND-1D states that limited, controlled, or authorized park access locations may be designated for specific areas within the inland management zone. Access via upper Willow Creek Road could fit into that category. Also see Master Response 1 – Public Access.
- 8-2 The commenters are concerned that the General Plan does not identify the requirements for creating new roads or parking lots and would like ROAD-1F to include guidelines to guarantee a less-than-significant impact. To do this, they suggest adding language about new facilities on substandard roads (add to SAFE-1A), fire safety (add to SAFE-1E), and meeting table 3-1's site selection criteria (add to FAC-1B). The homeowners would also like the EIR to reference these modified guidelines. The comment is noted. Section 3.2.2 Site Selection Criteria and Table 3-1 describe the process and the criteria for design and development of new facilities, including roads and parking areas. Guidelines were developed to give parameters to subsequent planning and development issues, and cannot be used to guarantee against less than significant impacts. The degree of environmental impact resulting from a specific project would be determined through the appropriate CEQA review process for the specific project proposal. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for the text of the new Guideline SAFE-1E. Furthermore, fire safety will be consistent with current practices within the Department, when fire danger rises to levels of concern, then closure orders are posted as necessary. The following are the Department's policies for vegetation management and fuel modification, and flammable vegetation/fuel modification.

0313.2.1.2 Vegetation Management and Fuel Modification

The Department maintains wildland properties in order to preserve the natural, cultural, and scenic features for the people of California. Many of these native ecosystems contain plants that can become flammable under specific environmental conditions of high wind, high temperature, and low humidity. These ecosystems inevitably burn either from natural or human causes. Buildings constructed adjacent to park units in the wildland-urban interface zone are at risk from wildland fires. There are three principal causes of ignition of structures in this zone.

The first cause involves the ignition of accumulations of ignitable materials on, under, or next to the structure, which, in turn, ignite decking or enter attics through soffit vents. This material can be ignited via ground fires or aerial flaming brands. This threat can be eliminated by removing all flammable debris that has accumulated on or under the building, clearing the vegetation that is within 30 feet of the building, and screening all openings to the attic or under the structure.

The second cause involves aerial flaming brands, which land directly on flammable surfaces of the structure. These brands can originate from wildfires over one half-mile away from the structure. Buildings that are constructed to strict codes of ignition-resistive materials are at very low risk of ignition from flaming brands.

The third cause is severe radiant/convective heat of burning material near the structure which can: 1) ignite the sides of the building, 2) break the windows, allowing burning embers into the interior of the building, 3) ignite the interior furnishings through the windows, or 4) burn/deform the window casings causing the windows to slip out.

Fire modeling, analysis of past wildland-urban interface zone fires, and experiments to determine the ignitability of structures have confirmed that even the radiant/convective heat of extreme flaming fronts poses low risk to any structure which is 130 feet or more distant, especially if that structure conforms to strict interface fire codes of ignitability, and window strength and reflectivity.

The Department routinely receives requests/demands from outside entities to clear wildland vegetation on Department lands in order to:

- a. Reduce the threat of wildfire to private property;
- b. Reduce fire insurance costs to private landowners;
- c. Comply with strict local ordinances; and
- d. Mitigate the threat of liability for maintaining a dangerous condition.

Department lands have also been subjected to trespass and encroachment by persons illegally attempting to modify the vegetation. Modifying ecosystems on park properties for the purpose of protecting adjacent private structures from wildland fire can significantly degrade park values and in some cases adversely impact populations of threatened endangered species and cultural resources.

0313.2.1.2.1 Flammable Vegetation/Fuel Modification Policy

It is the Department's policy to prohibit the construction and maintenance of firebreaks, fuelbreaks, and other fuel modification zones on Department lands, except when:

- 1. Required by state law to clear around its structures/facilities;
- 2. Previous legal commitments have been made to allow the creation and maintenance of fuel modification areas;
- 3. It is critical to the protection of life or park resources; or
- 4. Park vegetation 130 horizontal feet from a non-Department habitable structure is capable of generating sufficient radiant/convective heat when burning under Red Flag Warning conditions to ignite the habitable structure.

All identified and approved fuel modification zones will be described in the unit wildfire management plan and will be constructed and maintained to the Department's standards (refer to Natural Resources Handbook). All proposed fuel modification projects must be reviewed for environmental impacts (see DOM Chapter 0600, Environmental Review). All other areas previously modified for fire protection purposes but not meeting the above exceptions will be returned to natural conditions.

Fuel modification proposed by CDF and in keeping with Local Operating Plans will be carried out by CDF only after review and approval by the District Superintendent, in keeping with Department Policy. In those circumstances, CDF is to ensure all necessary permits, CEQA, and other requirements are met prior to proceeding with such work.

The Department will actively participate in the local land use decision process to prevent conflicts with this policy. DPR 181, Wildfire Protection, should be used as a template to convey the Department's objectives when corresponding with local landowners and regulatory and permitting entities.

2-20-07

Mr. David Keck California Dept. Parks and Rec. Planning Division Box 942896 Sacramento, Ca. 94296-0001

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FEB 2 2 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Dear Mr. Keck,

We are a small Community here on Coleman Valley Road but active and involved when threatened (note petition).

Though we support the Park Service acquisition of "Green" zones, i.e. Willow Creek Park,

WE OPPOSE IT'S PLAN FOR A PARKING LOT ON C.V.R. AND ANY ADVERTISMENT OF C.V.R. IN PARK PUBLICATIONS AS ILL ADVISED AND RECKLESS.

Please know our combined wealth far exceeds the 100 million dollars the Park Service $\underline{\text{owes}}$ and we will use legal recourse if our public servants fail us.

Very Sincerely,

Ernest Crabb

Diane Collins

Coleman Valley Road Preservation Society

Petition to the Sonoma County Parks Department and County Planning Commission:

As residents of Coleman Valley Road in West Sonoma County, we are concerned about the possible development of parking lots and their notification in park literature which will directly and indirectly increase the traffic on the road and illegal off-road driving. We are very concerned about the degradation of our community, the loss of scenic value and safety due to increased traffic on this narrow low speed country road.

We understand that Sonoma County plans to put a trail for hikers extending from the recently purchased Carrington Ranch on Highway 1 near the West end of Coleman Valley traveling east inland to connect with other trail systems. We believe that other than placing a footpath for hikers, there should be no additional development of Coleman Valley Rd. or parking accessible from Coleman Valley Road since this will encourage additional traffic on the road. Specifically, we are against the development of any parking lots on or accessible from Coleman Valley Road. Parking and access to the trailhead can be from Highway 1 and a coastal parking lot without involving Coleman Valley Road.

We are against the inclusion of a route, trail access or parking access on Coleman Valley Road shown in park literature or map guides to the public as this will certainly only further increase the traffic on the road, and the increased traffic will not only effect safety but will also detract from the quiet beauty of this area. The entire length of Coleman Valley Rd runs through private property. Any development of public parking accessible from this road, we are concerned will increase traffic and lead to increased risk of accidents, illegal off road driving and trespassing..

Any,increased traffic will have a major impact on the hikers, cyclists as well as the community living and working on this road. With the proposed trail located for several miles adjacent to Coleman Valley Rd., the hikers will be deleteriously affected by increased noise and air pollution from passing cars, motorcycles and tour buses. Discouraging parking and additional automobile traffic on Coleman Valley Rd. will preserve the scenic open space, agricultural use and natural attractiveness of this road.

9-1 (Cont)

Landholders and Residents of Coleman Valley Rd. between Joy Rd and Hwy 1 18080 300 acus

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Letter 9: Ernest Crabb, Diane Collins, and the Coleman Valley Road Preservation Society

February 20, 2007

9-1 The commenters oppose the establishment of or development of public access to the park from Coleman Valley Road, including parking lots at this park access point and their notification in state park literature. They are concerned this development would lead to increased traffic, illegal off-road driving, scenic degradation, safety issues, increased noise, and air pollution from traffic, and trespassing. They would like parking and access to the new trailhead to be from State Route 1. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.

Feb. 20, 2007

California Dept, of Parks— and Recreation Planning Division Ath: Dave Keck

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FEB 2 2 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Dear Mr. Keck -

Coleman Vally Road is not an appropriate access wal to willow Creek Area and should not be used for parking lot construction.

2 live on Wernan Valley Rd. It is an extremely windy and hazardons road with many potholer and blind curves. It is narrow and poorly maintained.

Just yesterday, driving into Seberstrywl on Coleman Valley, I had to veer sharply to the right three times in a ww to awaid head on collisions with cours traveling West. Cars unfamilian my Coleman Valley still drive way too toot and straddle the road. The lack of double yellow lines as well as lack of white "for" lines wake it a dongerous word leven withelut the severe increase of taffic that would occur with construction of said parking lab. Deputing lot at the proposed site is unecessary and not worth the increased danger, congestion and fire haraid which would result. It is not a viable solution.

10-1

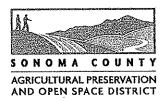
Thank you for taking my feedback into consideration

Sincerely

Letter 10: Kari Taber

February 20, 2007

10-1 The commenter opposes building a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road at the proposal site. The concerns include increased traffic and fire hazards and decreased public safety on this already hazardous road. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.



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NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

February 21, 2007

California Department of Parks and Recreation Rick Royer, Acting Sector Superintendent Russian River District P.O. Box 123 Duncan Mills, CA 95430

RE: Sonoma Coast State Beach - Preliminary General Plan (Park Plan) and Draft EIR - District's Comments

Dear Mr. Royer:

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District) staff has reviewed the above referenced documents as they pertain to the District's perpetual Red Hill and Willow Creek conservation easements and the pending Carrington Ranch conservation easement. We appreciate the thoroughness of the overall comprehensive approach taken by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) to define its vision and establish goals and guidelines to manage the proposed new park unit.

With the understanding that management and development plans will be developed following the adoption of the General Plan/Environmental Impact Report to provide more detail and specific objectives for various park-wide management issues, including vegetation, facilities development, roads and trails, District staff would like to comment on the Park Plan's second set of additional goals and guidelines that are applicable to each of the two management zones, coastline and inland watershed, shown in Exhibit 3-1.

We realize that the potential development areas, within which new facility sites may be selected, are approximate and more information will need to be gathered regarding the suitability of specific development sites. District staff concurs that the Administration and Operations section beginning on page 3-20 proposes broad guidance on and is not intended to constitute a formal Operations Plan for Sonoma Coast State Beach.

Nevertheless, Operational and Recreational Facilities goals, guidelines and site selection criteria have been developed in the preliminary Park Plan and are described on pages 3-24 through 3-28. We note that the majority of the Carrington Ranch property is designated a "Potential Facility Development Area" in the coastline zone. The District's pending transfer of this property to the Department and the associated proposed conservation easement delineates an area of less than six acres for an "Administrative Facility and Residential Use Area." The primary objective for the District when it acquired Carrington Ranch was to protect its significant scenic and natural resources. Thus, consideration of future uses and activities on the property should be planned and carried out in a manner that preserves those important values.

Chapter 4, Environment Analysis, page 4-6, outlines the impact analysis for degradation of viewsheds as less than significant for this proposed Park Plan and states that the Department would submit input to local, State, and federal agencies during the environmental review period of development projects in an effort to encourage mitigation for any potential visual impacts.

11-2

We understand that the District will be included as a local agency during the above referenced environmental review period regarding future development projects on any of the perpetual conservation easements it holds over properties within the Sonoma Coast State Beach. The District's conservation easements over these properties set forth permitted and prohibited uses and activities that should be considered by the Department as it plans future projects on District protected land.

11-3

District staff concurs with the Department that the Proposed Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative of those considered in its draft EIR, specifically for the example that the Department gave on page 4-33, "if existing adverse environmental conditions cannot be adequately remedied at existing sites in light of increasing visitation and usage in the future or if additional facilities must be developed to meet visitor demand and avoid overuse of existing facilities, the Proposed Project Alternative would allow a larger number of potential sites to be considered for development. Thus the potential for selecting the most optimum sites, in consideration of minimizing environmental impacts, may be chosen."

11-4

Lastly, in 2.3.7 New and Planned Land Acquisitions, page 2-115, the list includes the Upper Willow Creek Watershed and the Red Hill parcel but gives no mention of the District's participation as a partner in those acquisitions. Carrington Ranch is listed as: "The 330-acre Carrington Parcel was recently added to Sonoma Coast S.B." The District requests that this language be revised to reflect the District's acquisition and that Carrington Ranch is a pending addition to Sonoma Coast State Beach.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Department's preliminary General Plan and draft EIR. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Marta L. Puente Open Space Planner

c: Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager Maria J. Cipriani, Assistant General Manager Sue Gallagher, Deputy County Counsel

Letter 11: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District February 21, 2007

- 11-1 The commenters are concerned about the delineation of an area of less than six acres for an "Administrative Facility and Residential Use Area." They point out that the primary objective for the District is to protect Carrington Ranch's significant scenic and natural resources. They feel that future uses and activities on this property should be planned and carried out in a manner that preserves those values. The comment is noted. It is part of the mission of the Department of Parks and Recreation to protect significant scenic and natural resources of State Parks. The General Plan addresses park-wide operations and resource policies (see Section 3.1.4), and goals for Sonoma Coast State Beach (see Section 3.2). Zones identified as a "Potential Facility Development Area" represent areas that meet general development guidelines and criteria, and may be the focus of future detailed planning.
- 11-2 The commenters point out that the District's conservation easements over properties within the Sonoma Coast SB set forth permitted and prohibited uses and activities that should be considered by the Department as it plans future projects on District-protected land. The comment is noted, and the Department acknowledges that the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (SCAPOSD) holds conservation easements on inland portions of the park. The Department fully intends to comply with any easements or encumbrances on State Park properties. This includes permitted and prohibited uses and activities. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan for text to be added to the Statement of Management Intent for the Inland Watershed Management Zone (pages 3-36 to 3-37).
- 11-3 The commenters concur with the Department that the Proposed Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. The comment is noted, and no further response is necessary.
- 11-4 The commenters would like language in Section 2.3.7, "New and Planned Land Acquisitions," to be revised to reflect the District's acquisition of Carrington Ranch and that Carrington Ranch is a pending addition to Sonoma Coast SB. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for the revised text of Section 2.3.7 Carrington Parcel (page 2-115).

SONOMA COAST STATE BEACH ADVISORY COMMITTEE Post Office Box 13 • Jenner, CA 95450

Brenda Adelman

February 21, 2007

Philip Barlow

Sabrina Braham

Kate Fenton

David Kenly

Kathie Lowrey, Chair

Julie Marlowe

Don Martin

Darrell Sukovitzen

Elinor Twohy

Carol Vellutini

Lenny Weinstein

California Department of Parks & Recreation

Russian River District

P.O. Box 123

Duncans Mills, CA 95430

In 1983, the Park Commission appointed the Sonoma Coast State Beach Advisory Committee, a citizens' group representing a diversity of interests including recreation, protection of sensitive habitats, watershed restoration, fish biology, and long-range planning, to assist State Parks in planning for the future. Members worked with State Parks' staff to develop the Sonoma Coast State Beach Interim Management Plan (DPR 1984) for use on State Park lands in Willow Creek and the Sonoma Coast. Implementation of the plan began in 1987 with the opening of Pomo Campground, new trails, and picnic areas within Willow Crark. The Committee continues to meet with State Parks' leadership. We are pleased to submit the following comments and recommendations into the public record regarding the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for Willow Creck (EDAW 2007).

Trails: The Committee supports Goal TRAIL-1 to enhance visitor access and experiences by providing an interconnecting trail network. However, we recommend a new Guideline be included that mandates communication and cooperation during the process of trail planning be ongoing between State Parks and the community as a source of knowledge and traditional use. Most trails in Sonoma Coast SB are, and should remain, reserved for hiking only. Full investigation of soils, erosion potential, and sensitive resources should be included in the evaluation of the trail system within Sonoma Coast SB. Above all, trail usage must be compatible with passive recreation (birdwatching, picnicking, plein air art, photography, etc.) and protection of native flora and fauna.

The Committee identified concerns about equestrian use along the coast and in Willow Creek ove: 20 years ago. The issue was thoroughly discussed during the planning process that followed the acquisit on of the lower Willow Creek unit in the late 1970s and that resulted in the Sonoma Coast State Beach Interim Management Plan (DPR 1984). The Committee recommends continued equestrian use of trails in the dunes south of Salmon Creek and north of the Bodega Bay Marine Lab. We oppose the use of the lower Willow Creek area by equestrians due to the constraints inherent in the access road from Highway 1. We agree with the statement made in Appendix G: Willow Creek Access Site Evaluation (EDAW 2006) that 'The upper paved reaches of the County Road are problematic. The road is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass safely, especially if trailer use will be accommodated ..." and contend that these limitations are also severe in lower Willow Creek Road. Further discussion about this concern is included in the Roads/Access to Willow Creek section below.

The Committee has also been concerned about the safety of bicyclists along Highway 1 at Sonoms Coast SB for over 20 years (DPR 1984), and we continue to recommend that this issue be considered during future

SONOMA COAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

planning. A representative from Caltrans was present at our January 23, 2007, meeting to investigate potential for lower impact transportation alternatives other than automated vehicles. We support Guideline TRAIL-1C to coordinate development of a regional bicycle trail system and encourage State Parks, Caltrans, and others to cooperate in developing lower impact transportation modes and recreational opportunities.

Roads/Access to Willow Creek: The Committee supports Guideline ROAD-1H to conduct road and traffic studies for proposed access points for the Willow Creek watershed. However, the sample sites evaluated in

12-1 (Cont)

Roads/Access to Willow Creek: The Committee supports Guideline ROAD-1H to conduct road and traffic studies for proposed access points for the Willow Creek watershed. However, the sample sites evaluated in Appendix G contain numerous impacts that are potentially significant (e.g., traffic and safety issues for increased vehicle usage of Willow Creek Road by RVs and horse trailers, erosion from construction of new trails, removal of mature redwoods and other trees, impacts to NSO habitat, impacts to wetlands, visual impacts from new parking areas and other facilities, potential for geologic instability, potential impacts to cultural resources, etc.). This is inconsistent with the finding of "less than significant" in Section 4.6.11 of the Environmental Impacts Analysis (p. 4-23) and Section XV(a) in the Environmental Checklist in Appendix C. The types of projects utilizing Willow Creek Road that are contemplated in Appendix G are certain to result in "an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system" and may "substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses." We support the implementation of management goals and guidelines, but such planning does not necessarily result in less than significant impacts, and such a finding, particularly utilizing Sonoma County traffic data from 1980 (p. 4-24), is inappropriate.

12-2

The discussion of existing conditions on lower Willow Creek Road (pp. 2-106 to 2-107) is inadequate. Besides flooding on a regular basis, the road is narrow, fragile, and is already heavily used for access to two environmental campgrounds, one major trail, and heavy vehicles traveling between Highway 1 and State Parks' maintenance yard. The County sign at the entrance to Willow Creek Road from Highway 1 with that RVs and trailers are not advised. The width of the road is only approximately 12 feet in the residential section, and widening would result in significant environmental impacts. A major slip adjacent to the last houses has been recently repaired, but the elevation of the road was not restored, and the area of epair is unstable and inappropriate for heavy vehicles such as RVs and horse trailers and increased traffic.

12-3

Cultural Resources: The Committee is in agreement with Goal CUL-1 to protect, maintain, and preserve significant prehistoric and historic resources within Sonoma Coast SB and its Guidelines. We recommend an additional Guideline to coordinate with resource specialists on the evaluation, protection, preservation, and management of historic resources such as Russian era occupation and historic family ranching. We recommend that Guidelines CUL-1A (develop an inventory, mapping system, and database for resources that may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register), CUL-1C (prepare and conduct surveys and inventories of cultural resources in areas subject to development, and CUL-1D (identify and evaluate cultural landscapes), and the recommended Guideline re potential historic restoration/interpretive sites be included in the bulleted list of plans and investigations on page ES-3 of the Executive Summary and anywhere also that such a list or discussion occurs in the document (e.g., ES-4).

12-4

Salmonid Habitat Restoration: The Committee supports and recommends continued participation in the restoration of salmonid habitat by State Parks, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, the Coastal Conservancy, LandPaths, and others.

12-5

Sunset Rocks: We recommend that resources in the coastal bluff area known as Sunset Rocks have a higher level of protection, possibly through review and enforcement of the existing permitting program. Climbers

SONOMA COAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

and rock collectors have been heavily impacting this area, which has been receiving much publicity. We recommend that all climbing groups be required to obtain permits for use of the northermost Sunset Rock. We do not recommend issuance of permits to climb the southern Sunset Rock as it is fragile and needs protection. The statement at the bottom of page 2-111 that "the rocks below Peaked Hill (known by local climbers as Sunset Rock or Sunset Boulders) are a significant paleontological site with prehistoric animal rubbings" is incorrect; research is ongoing but not proven.

12-5 (Cont)

Grazing in Willow Creek Watershed: The Committee is of many minds with regard to grazing. Many feel that the importance of family agriculture would qualify it as a "core purpose" as discussed on page 4-7 for exception from State Parks' grazing policy. Family agricultural began in the watershed in the 1860s, the Baxman family (who have been ranching in Willow Creek since the 1950s) is interested in discussing use of their facilities for historic interpretation, and Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District has offered to provide guidance and possibly funding for preparation of a ranch and grazing management plan. They would also be available to provide on-going facilitation between the rancher and State Parks. Further, there are now, and have been in the past, other exceptions to the policy in the watershed, and a 5-year lease renewal agreement has recently been signed for the Red Hill property.

12-6

Many, however, express concern for healing of the upper watershed from past uses, including grazing. Some believe that the area should be allowed to rest from all activities. Many people, including range evologists and other scientists, believe that properly controlled grazing results in increased opportunity for native species; others disagree. The Committee does agree that further research into potential benefits from grazing is warranted. We recommend that Guidelines be added in both the Vegetation Management and Cultural Resources Management sections to evaluate potential benefits to the environment and public education from grazing, and that, should grazing be allowed, leases be for at least a 5-year period.

Members of the Committee are also concerned about the effects of vacating historically grazed lard without planning and funding for exotic vegetation control in place. If scientific investigation concludes that grazing should not be allowed, we recommend implementation of an exotic vegetation eradication program. A Guideline should be included that provides for obtaining funding for its implementation, as well as its ongoing monitoring and maintenance.

Recreation: Use of boulders for climbing in Pomo Canyon Creek and in other fragile coastal areas should be evaluated and monitored to prevent damage to sensitive resources. Climbing use should cease until a baseline can be established upon which to assess impacts. Use should then be guided by the terms of a climbing permit (see further discussion in Sunset Rocks section above).

12-7

Global Warming: Since the enactment of AB 32 in January of 2007, which codified that "global warming poses a serious threat to the economic well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment of California," a discussion of the potential effects of increased vehicular use by visitors along the coast should be included in the planning documentation for Sonoma Coast SB. Guideline ROAD-1E to coordinate with local organizations to maintain existing and advocate for additional public transportation is a good example of the spirit of the new global warming emissions reduction program. Development of lower impact transportation modes and recreational opportunities, as mentioned above in the Trails section, v/ould be another.

SONOMA COAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods: The single sentence description of Stewards on page 2-104 is insufficient. We suggest the following wording:

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards)

Stewards is a nonprofit public benefit corporation that has been working in partnership with the Department to provide volunteer opportunities for Parks in the Russian River District, including Sonoma Coast SB since 1985. On-going programs include Seal Watch, Whale Watch, a visitor center in Jenner, tidepool education, watershed education in Willow Creek for adults and children, trail maintenance, water quality monitoring in the Willow Creek watershed, and beach cleanups. The Russian River District Volunteers in Parks program depends on Stewards to provide funding for educational and interpretive activities, resource management projects, and assistance with development of interpretive facilities. Stewards obtained funding for and managed development of the Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Munagement Plan and the Sustainable Channel Development in Lower Willow Creek, Sonoma County, California (Prunuske Chatham, Inc. 2005). Future projects in Sonoma Coast SB include continued planning and implementation of restoration efforts in the Willow Creek watershed, development of an Environmental Living Program for school children, the development of new trails and signage, ongoing docent-led outings, and the development of Mounted Assistance Units. Funding has been secured from the California State Coastal Conservancy to support many of these efforts.

12-9

Other Suggestions: There is a reference to Mendocino District on page 2-104 in the section about Stewards. All such references should be removed. The correct term is "Russian River District." Also, the reference in the section about LandPaths on page 2-104 does not contain the word "Integrated." The proper term is Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan.

12-10

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan and draft EIR. The Committee anticipates continued cooperation with State Parks and the successful implementation of the General Plan.

Sincerely.

Kathie Lowrey, Chair

Sonoma Coast State Beach Advisory Committee

Responses to Comments

Sonoma Coast State Beach

Letter 12: Sonoma Coast State Beach Advisory Committee

February 21, 2007

- 12-1 The commenters would like a new guideline to be added that mandates ongoing communication and cooperation between the Department and community during the trail planning process. They would like trails to remain reserved for hiking and passive recreation only and oppose equestrian use because of poor access. They would like a full investigation of soils, erosion potential, and sensitive resources included in the evaluation of the trail system. Finally, they would like a means of lower impact transportation to be developed. The comment is noted. Planning for trails and other transportation systems will involve communication and input from the public as required in Goal COMM-1 and Guideline COMM-1B of the General Plan. Assessment of specific site conditions is an integral part of any trail planning effort. Please refer to Guideline TRAIL-1A, which calls for the development of a trails management plan. The Russian River District fully intends to continue ongoing communication with its constituents and concerned parties in any planning for Sonoma Coast SB. Public input is also part of the planning, permitting and CEQA process. The Russian River District intends to provide for a diverse recreational opportunity, to be consistent with the nature of the resources and in conjunction with the Site Selection Criteria in section 3.2.2 and in Table 3-1. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.
- The commenters feel the sample sites evaluated in Appendix G contain numerous impacts that are potentially significant, which is inconsistent with the less-thansignificant findings in Section 4.6.1. They feel that the implementation of management goals and guidelines would not result in less-than-significant impacts. They also feel that the discussion of existing conditions on lower Willow Creek Road is inadequate. The comment is noted. The environmental analysis is a general, program-level review of the impacts of implementation of the General Plan on the environment, which includes the call for an access study. The study itself would not result in a significant effect to the environment, because it does not commit to development of access on its own. If any specific projects were to be proposed to move forward after adoption of the General Plan, these projects would undergo subsequent CEQA review as described in sections 1.2.2 and 1.3.5 of the General Plan. Any impacts identified at that time will be analyzed for their significance on the resources of concern to the commenters, and, if necessary, mitigation measures to reduce these impacts to less than significant would be proposed. Please also refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for the text of the revised description of Willow Creek Road on pages 2-106 to 2-107.

- 12-3 The commenters recommend a guideline calling for a resource specialist to coordinate with the park to evaluate, protect, preserve, and manage historic resources. The commenters also recommend the Guidelines CUL-1A, CUL-1C, CUL-1D, and the above recommended guideline be included in the bulleted list of plans and investigations on page ES-3 and wherever a similar list or discussion occurs in the document. The comments are noted. Departmental staff includes resource specialists with diverse backgrounds. The appropriately qualified resource specialists are involved in all aspects of resource management issues. A specific guideline for this purpose is redundant and, therefore, not necessary. A cultural assessment will be completed to assist the District in identifying cultural and historical sites within the Upper Willow Creek portion of Sonoma Coast SB before decisions about development of additional access are made. That information, combined with existing documentation will provide a baseline for evaluation during the CEQA and 5024 processes. Historical resources will continue to be evaluated and documented as funding is available. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for the text of the three bulleted items to be added to the Executive Summary identifying guidelines for the cultural resources.
- 12-4 The commenters support continued participation in the restoration of salmonid habitat. The comment is noted, and no further response is necessary.
- 12-5 The commenters recommend that resources in the coastal bluff area have more protection and that climbers be required to obtain permits to use the northernmost Sunset Rock. They also state that text at the bottom of page 2-111 is incorrect because site is not proven to be a significant paleontological site. The comment is noted. The Department currently has a permitting process in effect within the Russian River District. The District will continue to evaluate this process and make essential changes, when necessary. The commenter is correct regarding the significance of the paleontological site at Sunset Rock. Please see Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for revised text regarding Sunset Rock.
- 12-6 The commenters suggest healing of the upper watershed from past uses and would like guidelines to be added about further research into the potential benefits of grazing. If grazing is allowed, they prefer a 5-year lease period. If grazing is not allowed, they recommend implementation of an exotic vegetation eradication program, with guidelines for funding, the program and monitoring and maintaining the area. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 2 Grazing. Please refer to Guideline NAT-1C, page 3-11 regarding the control and/or eradication of non-native invasive species.
- 12-7 The commenters want climbing to cease until a baseline is established for assessing impacts. Then they want climbers to be required to have climbing permits. The comment is noted. Please refer to the response to comment 12-5.

- 12-8 The commenters would like global warming to be addressed because of the increased traffic. The comment is noted. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for expanded text to Guideline ROAD-1E and text of the new Guideline SUS-1C. Implementation of these guidelines would help to reduce impacts resulting from potentially increased park visitation as a result of Plan implementation at less-than-significant levels.
- 12-9 The commenters feel the single-sentence description of stewards on page 2-104 is insufficient and suggest text they prefer. The comment is noted. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for revised text to the description of the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods on page 2-104.
- 12-10 The commenters explain that the term "Mendocino District" should be replaced with "Russian River District," and that "Integrated" should be included in the title of the "Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan." The comments are noted. The title is correct as it appears in the General Plan. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for revised text on page 2-104 regarding the name of the district.

Deborah Koons Garcia PO Box 895 Mill Valley CA 94942

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FEB 2 2 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE

Dear Dave Keck, California Department of Parks and Recreation

I own the property on Coleman Valley Road right next to the Park, right next to the place where a parking lot may be built.

When I think of the issue of building a parking lot at this place on Coleman Valley Road, I think of the words to the Joni Mitchell song- "They take paradise and put up a parking lot." Indeed, Coleman Valley Road runs through very beautiful land and affords amazing views of the Pacific coastline, coastal prairies and redwood forests. I object to putting a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road for several reasons, some of them reasons any citizen can understand and some of them personal.

I own the land directly adjacent to the proposed parking area, right north of that part of the road. There is a pond right next to the proposed parking area. The access to the pond has been fenced off by the community but it is still possible to see the pond. The more the "general public" stop at that spot, the more likely it is they will want to swim in the pond, and it will get a reputation as a great place to swim- ("Park right in the parking lot!") Even if the fencing is prison-like, people will simply go around and come back to the pond, especially after a hot hike. There could be dozens of people there any day in the summer. That puts me in a position of having to police the pond, and to possibly face legal action if someone hurts himself or drowns there.

The problem of having a parking lot there is that even if there are spaces for 7 or 8 cars, far more than 7 or 8 people will read/hear about the spot and come out there to hike or picnic. If the lot is full- and it will fill up early in the day, especially on weekends- then they will just park on the road. Since they will have driven all that way to hike or bike, they are not going to turn around and drive another 30 minutes to find another place to park. They will want to get hiking, so they will park on the road. It is a blind curve, barely

big enough for two cars. There are more and more road bikes on the road. What happens if 2 cars meet at a parked car, or a road bike and a car meet going around a parked car? It's a terrible accident waiting to happen.

People should want to find this park- they should discover it- and having the upper park with on trail and no car access will enhance this - and having a 20 or 30 cars along the side of the road could ruin the whole experience of this road and of the park. People would find the lot full and park all along the road and walk back to the trail head. Already, during their large public events, there is a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road at the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. Every day, especially on weekends, one can see the parking lot at Ocean Song, which is a ways down the road from this proposed parking lot. Coleman Valley Road is designated a scenic highway. The Coastal Commission is mandated to keep eyesores from land on the Coast. So why create another eyesore parking lot which will draw more cars that it can handle so that the beautiful road ends up seeming like it goes from one parking lot to the next to the next. If hundreds of people think they can park there every weekend, it certainly will draw many many more cars on a road that simply cannot safely accommodate them.

I also believe that because of the internet, many more people will be drawn to this park than anyone could imagine- it will be very, very popular. And Coleman Valley Road could be lined with cars for a mile on either side of any parking lot. Who is going to police that? Who is going to give them tickets or tow them or be responsible if there are accidents- and there would be.

People who want to hike at this new State park should get used to entering the park from below at Route 1 to Willow Creek and Above Route 116 to Freezeout Creek - where there is no danger or real ugliness created by parking areas. Their hike up or around can allow them to appreciate nature rather than letting cars and parking lots ruin Coleman Valley Road.

There is no really good reason to take this paradise and turn it into parking lot. That would degrade, not enhance the experience of being there.

Thank you

Otheran Wars Jung Deborah Koons Garcia 13-1 (Cont)

Letter 13: Deborah Koons Garcia

No Date

13-1 The commenter opposes building a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road at the proposal site. The commenter is concerned the parking lot will increase traffic, parking on the road, safety hazards, and the need for police attention.

The commenter prefers people access the park from State Route 1 to Upper Willow Creek and above State Route 116 to Freezeout Creek. The commenter feels the parking lot will increase trespassing and use of the nearby fenced pond.

The comments are noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access regarding the concern about a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road. Regarding trespassing, the Department regards adjacent private lands and facilities as an important consideration when planning for specific area facilities and activities for the public. Any specific project proposals will comply with all applicable laws, and regulations (see Guideline FAC-1K). The Department will take the appropriate actions to ensure the public knows where State Park property boundaries are located, and that they are properly signed.

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FEB 2 3 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE

Dave Keck, General Plan Section California Department of Parks and Recreation, Planning Division P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

February 21, 2007

Dear Mr. Keck:

I am a resident of Coleman Valley Road and am very concerned about any plans that include Coleman Valley Road as an access point for the Willow Creek Park. This is a very narrow, winding rural road that provides a community and access for local residents. We ride our bikes and horses on this road, walk on this road and drive on this road. It is vital to our daily lives. My safety and the safety of the other residents on this road would be put in jeopardy if you increase the volume of traffic on this road by developing public parking lots and encouraging public access. Development of any parking lots on Coleman Valley road would increase public traffic causing an increase in accidents on this road that is difficult to navigate even in good weather. When it is foggy, as it often is, it is extremely dangerous if you do not know the road.

As it is now, Coleman Valley Road is a true gem of Sonoma County. Please do not destroy this gem. Please help us preserve it as a small quiet country road where one can still see cattle grazing freely on open range and watch a golden eagle fly or badger shuffle by. There are alternative access points for Willow Creek that can be utilized and developed to bring in the public to Willow Creek Park, as you desire. One gem should not be destroyed in order to expose another. I hike in Willow Creek Park often and drive to Freeze Out Flat to access it. It is already developed and could be developed further. I hardly ever see anyone on the trails at that access point. Let's use what we have before destroying more precious environments and endangering more wildlife habitats.

I would request that my tax dollars be used to manage and increase usage of existing, completely under utilized State Parks. Why must we completely develop every possible park access when existing ones are not even being used? For example, I walk the Pomo Canyon Trail and the upper ridgeline trails of Armstrong Woods and never see anyone on them. What a waste. It makes much more economic and environmental sense to develop public interest in these forested ridgeline trails before developing more. Please spend our limited state funds making sure people know about and use existing trails and access points before you develop more trails and access points.

Please do not destroy the truly unique, serene beauty of Coleman Valley Road and compromise my safety by developing public parking lots on this road for park access. Sincerely,

Maureen Kobbe

Resident, Coleman Valley Road

14-1

Letter 14: Maureen Kobbe

February 21, 2007

- 14-1 The commenter opposes building a parking lot on Coleman Valley Road at the proposal site and is concerned about the increased traffic on an already unsafe road. The commenter suggests using Freezout Flat to access the Willow Creek Park, which is underused. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 Public Access.
- The commenter feels the existing trails are underused and the commenter does not support spending money to create any new trails. The comment is noted and the Department agrees that the State Park System includes many park areas that are underutilized, including the Upper Willow Creek area. The General Plan presents several potential locations for consideration of appropriate access, support facilities, and appropriate visitor uses in the Upper Willow Creek area. Goal TRAIL-1 supports enhancing visitor access and use of the park by providing an interconnecting trail network that accommodates various transportation modes. Guideline TRAIL-1A requires the development of a trails management plan that will evaluate existing trails and assess the potential for new trails. Guidelines COMM-1A and COMM-1B require that surveys be conducted to determine additional services that would be supported by park visitors and that opportunity be provided for public input and review during the planning phases of major facilities development projects.

RECEIVED

FEB 2 3 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER P.O.Box 403 18200 Willow Creek Road Occidental, Ca. 95465 Feburary 16, 2007

California Dept. of Parks and Recreation Planning Division Dave Keck: Supervisor, General Plan Section P. O. Box 942896 Sacramento, Ca. 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Keck:

I am writing to you as an immediate neighbor to the Willow Creek State Park. I appreciate the opportunity to give my public comment regarding the Sonoma Coast State Beach Preliminary General Plan & Draft Environmental Impact Report.

I have lived in our house the past 30 years. I have have had a relationship with the various owners of what is now the State Park, and like you, they were receptive to the issues of public safety. Louisiana Pacific changed their routing pattern for their logging trucks as the neighborhood population increased. Mendocino Redwoods was cognizant of the narrowness of the road and the huge increase in bikers and pedestrians as the area became more well known.

In a meeting with Landpaths and one of your own commissioners, Carol Hart, it was decided that horse trailers could not safety navigate the road for their own safety as well as the neighbors and local people. There is no passable route in many of the twists and turns that exist on the road for both horse trailers, cars and bikes.

It is with this brief background in mind that I write with anger that the Parks General Plan is considering parking lots based on the cursory review of EDAW. To my knowledge, EDAW spent one day out here. One day. That is insulting to me and outrageous to me that the EDAW report holds such a prominent part in your General Plan. I welcome local people to this area and

to the State Park because they have a history and knowledge with how to drive on county backroads. With the advertising of the State Park, we have had an increase in fire arms being shot, 4 wheelers tearing up the hillsides, grasses growing because the State Parks stop allowing local cattle on the meadows (which kept fire danger to a minimum in the summer).

15-1 (Cont)

I am against using upper Willow Creek Road as an access to the State Park. I support local access because it has historical foundation and the locals know the area and road conditions and fire and safety concerns.

Thank you for listening.

Miriam Redstone

Letter 15: Miriam Redstone

February 16, 2007

15-1 The commenter points out that in the past Louisiana Pacific and Mendocino Redwoods rerouted their logging trucks from upper Willow Creek Road because they recognized the road as unsafe from the increase in resident use. It had already been decided that horse trailers would not use this route for similar reasons. The commenter is angry that upper Willow Creek Road would be suggested for construction of a parking lot and feels that EDAW's one day at the site was not enough time to make an educated suggestion. The commenter points out that the Willow Creek Road parking lot would lead to a decrease in public safety and an increase in erosion and fire hazards. The commenter is against using upper Willow Creek Road as an access to the state park and supports local access only. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.

Michael Murphy P.O. box 537 Occidental, CA 95465 707-874-3404

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FEB 2 3 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Russian River District Headquarters 25381 Steelhead Blvd. Duncan Mills, CA 95430 P.O. Box 123 Duncan Mills, CA

February 22, 2007

RE: Sonoma Coast State Beach

Dear Sir:

I am an equestrian that has been riding the Willow Creek property for years before it became a park. I have permission to ride on Mendocino Redwoods property also. My fiancée has been riding both these properties for over 30 years. We keep our horses on Willow Creek Rd. at the Mountain Wolf Ranch. We have been meeting with the local Willow Creek Rd. group, with State Parks personnel, Landpaths, and local park users at the Occidental Fire Dept. We are patrollers for Landpaths.

It is my request, along with the Willow Creek Rd. group, not to open the fire gate across the road. When it was open in the past off road vehicles accessed the grassy hills and did a significant amount of erosion damage. This is also a fire concern with the high grass.

I would like to see if it is possible to use Pomo Canyon for an access point. I would also request that we are allowed to ride our horses on Red Hill and Pomo Canyon. If this is to be a State Beach Park, why can we equestrians have the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of these areas?

As a member of Back Country Horseman of California we are a service organization that looks forward to helping establish a fantastic park for all visitors. Please keep me informed about the progress and needs in the park.

Yours truly,

Michael Murphy

National Director BCHC

Associate Director Gold Ridge Conservation District

16-1

Responses to Comments

Letter 16: Michael Murphy, National Director Back Country Horseman of California, Associate Director Gold Ridge Conservation District

February 22, 2007

16-1 The commenter does not want the fire gate across Willow Creek Road to be opened because of concerns about erosion damage and fire hazards. The commenter would like to use Pomo Canyon as an access point and would like to be allowed to ride horses on Red Hill and Pomo Canyon. The comments are noted. The gates on Willow Creek Road were constructed and controlled by Sonoma County to manage access due to road and fire conditions. State Parks will cooperate with the county to manage vehicle access in a manner consistent with the protection of the health and safety of the public. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access for further clarification. Guideline TRAIL-1A calls for the preparation of a trails management plan. Such a plan will address trail potential and uses through out the entire unit. Equestrian use will be considered, along with hiking and bicycle use. Identified trails and types of use will be based on the ability of the resources to sustain the trail and respective use, management of recreational activities, and suitable access and trailhead facility locations.

February 22, 2007

USSIGN PIVER

California Department of Parks & Recreation Russian River District P.O. Box 123 Duncans Mills, CA 95430

Comments on Preliminary General Plan/DEIR

Sunset Rocks: I recommend that resources in the coastal bluff area known as Sunset Rocks have a higher level of protection, possibly through review and enforcement of the existing permitting program. Climbers and rock collectors have been heavily impacting this area after a series of articles and web sites on supposed cultural resources at the site were published. I recommend that all climbing groups be required to obtain permits for use of the northernmost Sunset Rock. I do not recommend issuance of permits to climb the southern Sunset Rock as it is fragile and needs protection. The statement at the bottom of page 2-111 that "Protection of rocks below Peaked Hill are a significant paleontological site with prehistoric animal rubbings" is incorrect; research is ongoing but not proven.

2.1.1 Existing Land Use Classification- Name Change-I suggest changing the name of Sonoma Coast State Beach to Sonoma Coast State Park. Under the existing classification, State Beaches are defined as "consisting

of areas with frontage on the ocean or bays designed to provide swimming, boating, fishing and other beachoriented recreational activities. With so many deaths at the coast and the amount of money required to warn people about dangerous waves and not to go into the water it is contradictory to call our coast a beach. Support reclassification pg. 3-4 "Department recommends in this general plan that the classification be changed from State Beach to State Park." as long as passive recreation is a priority.

1.1.3 Spirit of Place The statement: "As Sonoma Coast SB continues its path in the modern era of leisure and . preservation, the stewardship of the coastline and inland watershed areas is pivotal in maintaining a ba ance between a pristine vision of the Sonoma Coast as it once was naturally and an alterative extreme of a natural playground that it could be. Please take out the word playground. The implication is negative to me. Actually the whole paragraph needs to be re-worded. It never could be a natural playground as we have provisions in place already to protect the natural and cultural resources.

Paleontological Resources-3-14 Please take out any mention of Pleistocene animal rubs." Furthermore, unique rock slicks on the sides of coastal outcrops that may have been caused by Pleistocene megafauna (mamnioths or bison) rubbing against the rocks (Parkman 2002) are an unusual feature in the park. Natural artifacts, such as the possible Pleistocene animal rubs may represent a unique resource that may have both natural and cultural resource value as well as potential as an interpretation topic. Erosion and excavation, associated with site improvement and construction activities, may expose fossils and other paleontological resources. Other human activities may result in damage or destruction of these resources. This has already happened!! Protection and preservation of paleontological resources of cultural importance are addressed by the following goal and

Goal NAT-3: Protect and preserve significant paleontological resources within Sonoma Coast SB.

17-1

17-2

17-3

.17-4

☐ Guideline NAT-3A: Inventory, map, and monitor paleontological resources at SonomaCoast SB for their	
protection, preservation, and interpretation. (Until animal rubs are proven do not initiate guideline NAT-3D)	
☐ Guideline NAT-3B: Consult and coordinate with the Department's natural resource specialists if unu sual or	
major paleontological resources are discovered (i.e., exposed by excavation), to determine significance and	
implement appropriate remediation. (Add to consult and coordinate with geologist)	
☐ Guideline NAT-3C: Coordinate with cultural resource specialists on protection and	
preservation of paleontological resources such as the possible Pleistocene animal rubs	
that may have both natural and cultural resource value.	
☐ Guideline NAT-3D: Develop interpretive programs and facilities that inform visitors about	
the importance of protecting paleontological resources at Sonoma Coast SB.	

17-4 (Cont)

For Willowcreek Addition, somewhere in guidelines, I suggest allowing the Baxmans a 5 year grazing lease while doing scientific investigation over effects of grazing in this area. I am concerned about the effects of vacating historically grazed land without planning and funding for exotic vegetation control in place. If scientific investigation concludes that grazing should not be allowed, I recommend implementation of an exotic vegetation eradication program. A Guideline should be included that provides for obtaining funding for its implementation, as well as its on-going monitoring and maintenance.

17-5

I want to commend State Parks for the boardwalk on the Kortum Trail. The badly eroded and muddy trail in that area is no longer a problem and it is a delight to walk on the boardwalk. The vegetation has grown back in. Also the new bathrooms at Wright's Beach are state of the art and wonderful.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Carol Vellutini

Taril Wellutine

Letter 17: Carol Vellutini

February 22, 2007

- 17-1 The commenter recommends that resources in Sunset Rocks have a higher level of protection. The commenter suggests requiring climbing permits and withholding permits for climbing Sunset Rock. The commenter points out that the rocks below Peaked Hill have not been proven to be a paleontological site and research is ongoing. The comment is noted. If the final evaluation of the "Rubbing Rock" status determines it to be a significant palenontological feature, the District will determine the appropriate management treatment for protection of this feature. Furthermore, Goal NAT-3 and Guidelines NAT-3A through NAT-3D call for the mapping and inventorying, protection, and interpretation and education of significant palenontological resources. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan for the revision of the statement on page 2-111 regarding Peaked Hill.
- 17-2 The commenter would like the park to be named "Sonoma Coast State Park" and not "Sonoma Coast State Beach." The commenter supports this classification change as long as passive recreation is a priority. The comment is noted. Unit classification is discussed in sections 2.1.1 and 3.1.3 of the General Plan. The reclassification of Sonoma Coast State Beach to Sonoma Coast State Park is currently being considered.
- 17-3 The commenter references a statement that talks about the Sonoma Coast SB as a "playground." The commenter wants this term removed and the whole paragraph reworded because the area could never be a playground because of the provisions protecting the natural and cultural resources in the area. The comment is noted. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan regarding the use of the term "playground" in the General Plan.
- 17-4 The commenter wants mention of Pleistocene animal rubs removed and notes that unique park resources have already been damaged or destroyed. The commenter also requests that Guideline NAT-3D stay uninitiated until animal rubs are proven, and would like to add text to Guideline NAT-3B requiring the park to consult and coordinate with a geologist. The comments are noted. The commenter is correct regarding the significance of the paleontological site at Sunset Rock. Please see Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for revised text regarding Sunset Rock.
- 17-5 The commenter suggests allowing the Baxmans a 5-year grazing lease while doing scientific investigations on the effects of grazing in this area. If grazing is not allowed, the commenter recommends a vegetation eradication program and a guideline for obtaining funding, monitoring, and maintaining the program. Please refer to Master Response 2 Grazing.

To: Dave Keck, General Plan Section From: Christine Taylor 18150 Coleman Valley Road Occidental CA 95465 ph 874.3293

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FEB 2 7 2007

NORTHERN SERVICE CENTER

Hello Dave,

I am writing as a concerned resident of Coleman Valley Road (as well as someone capable of common sence) regarding plans made to install an entry way and parking lot on this road for access to hiking trails. It's such a bad idea for so many reasons. I've lived on this road for eleven years and know it well. I am familiar with the traffic patterns already established and already increasing in volume due to population increases and tourism popularity. On sunny weekends we have lots of cars; many that drive fast and inconsiderately, especially at the latter part of the day when beach goers are returning from Route One driving towards Occidental. The vibe is often a party vibe and/or a rushing to get home or to dinner vibe. It's a very dangerous time and I keep both my children and animals on alert during these times. This is not a recreational road. A recreational road needs to be safe and this one is not.

It seems like a no-brainer that the best entry way and parking lot areas for this park are the ones already established or can be established via an already trafficky road such as Route One. There is a double line, it is a road that is patroled and monitored and there is an already established car culture there. I think it is great poor planning and ignorance to invite a stream of tourists onto this road. We have open cattle grazing, many of us keep chickens and goats, we are avid walkers on this road, we collect the litter that tourists throw from their windows and we appreciate the relative safety that our deer, wildlife and children have out here - this is wilderness - why are you planning to change that?

I have personally helped with five accidents since I've been here. The most recent, at the S curve where one person died and the other was seriously injured, was traumatic for myself and for my little girl. It was not the first time I've been the first person onto that sort of scene. I've had to calm and tend to children of people who've had accidents out here, I've been up in the middle of the night helping drunken fools pull their cars up from the culverts edges and have many, many times been the house that people have finally made their way to when their cars break down. There is not cell phone reception out here and your inviting people out here is irresponsible.

Another point I want to make is this: this road is not a focal point for repair and upkeep. We go long, long months and years without repairs to pot holes and road edges slipping away, limbs falling and leaning and on the subject of litter! THERE IS SO MUCH LITTER ALREADY AND WE, THE RESIDENTS CLEAN IT UP!

Please reconsider putting a parking lot and trail head in on this stretch of Coleman Valley Road. Listing such a thing in brochures and websites will be detrimental to this area and to everyone involved. Hiking and getting out to the wilderness is a good thing, but jeopardizing the wilderness culture and everyones safety is not.

Thanks for listening! Don't do it!

Christine Taylor

Letter 18: Christine Taylor

No Date

18-1 The commenter does not want Coleman Valley Road to have a parking lot with access to Sonoma Coast SB because there would be too much traffic, a decrease in safety, and an increase in litter on this poorly maintained residential road. The commenter suggests using preexisting parking lots or creating one off State Route 1. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.



February 22, 2007 -

California Department of Parks and Recreation Ptanning Division P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296-0001 Attention: Dave Keck, Supervisor, General Plan Section

SUBJECT: Comments on Preliminary General Plan & Draft EIR for Sonoma Coast State Beach

Dear Mr. Keck;

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Preliminary General Plan for Sonoma Coast State Beach. Please find LandPaths' comments in the attached table.

We look forward to continuing to assist State Parks in the management of the Willow Creek addition to Sonoma Coast State Beach.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Glass Field Programs Director LandPaths



LandPaths Comments on Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR for Sonoma Coast State Beach

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LandPaths' Comment or Suggested Change	Grazing is of historic and cultural significance on the Sonoma Coast. As such, it should be evaluated and considered as a means of managing vegetation for firel reduction and invasive species management.	With the addition of the upper Willow Creek parcel to the Sonoma Coast unit, State Parks should evaluate and consider options for reducing fuel load within the unit. This could include controlled burns, fuel fadder management, grazing, etc.	Mycological species should be inventoried and policy developed to allow limited and regulated harvesting by park users for individual use.	Trails should be developed so as to provide for access to as many park users as possible. New trails should be designated "multi-use" unless there is a demonstrated reason to do otherwise. Existing trails should be converted to multi-use whenever where resource conditions allow.	To support this goal, a guideline should be established to provide for hiring additional DPR staff for the purpose of providing on-site, personal interpretation. This staff could be in the form of a volunteer manager to oversee additional volunteer interpreters and docents.	DPR staff should work with local community groups and non-profit organizations to develop a trail plan for the Sonoma Coast unit. These groups should also be encouraged to participate in the development of new trails and maintenance of existing trails.	DPR staff should use the trail plan to identify priorities for trail development and then construct traits based on these priorities. Volunteer labor should be utilized whenever possible to reduce cost and bolster community investment.	DPR staff should utilize volunteer labor whenever possible to reduce cost of maintaining existing trails.	DPR staff should maintain the existing network of logging roads in the new Willow Creek acquisition for the purposes of administrative access and reduction of sedimentation.	Recognizing that community investment and volunteer, LandPaths supports this guideline.	Park facilities have been established by Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District, in partnership with LandPaths & DPR. (mowed trails, bench, display panel, parking area cleared, etc.)
Specific issue addressed	Veg Management via grazing	Fuel load reduction	Musirroom gathering	Multi-use trails	Interpretive staff	Input from community groups	Construction of new trails	Maintenance of existing trails	Maintenance of existing logging road network	Community input	Carrington Ranch description
Section of Plan	Goal NAT-1A	Goal NAT-1A	Goal NAT-1A	Goal REC-1A	Goal EDU ~ 1	Goal TRAIL-1:	Goal TRAIL-1;	Goal TRAIL-1:	Goal ROAD-1:	Guideline EDU-	4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4. 4

19-5

19-2

19-3

19-4

19-1

19-6

19-7

Letter 19: Jonathan Glass, Field Programs Director with LandPaths

February 22, 2007

- 19-1 The commenters provide feedback on Goal NAT-1A and suggest that grazing and other means of fuel load reduction (e.g., controlled burns, fuel ladder management) are evaluated and considered. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 Grazing regarding the use of grazing to accomplish Goal NAT-1A. Please refer to the response to comment 8-2 for Department's policies for vegetation management and fuel modification, and flammable vegetation/fuel modification.
- 19-2 The commenters provide feedback on Goal NAT-1A and would like mycological (fungi) species to be inventoried and policy developed regarding their use by park users. The comment is noted. The Department's policy on mushrooms is as follows:

0317.1.3. Mushrooms

Collecting permits for mushrooms for scientific or educational purposes may be obtained as described in DOM Section 0313.4.1, Scientific Collecting Permits. The collecting of mushrooms in units of the State Park System is permitted by CCR, Title 14, \S 4306 when specifically authorized by the Department for non-commercial personal use.

Conditional authorization for mushroom collection for non-scientific or non-commercial use may be obtained from the District Superintendent of the specific unit of the State Park System where collection is to occur. Such collection is limited by regulation to a batch of mushrooms not to exceed five pounds wet weight or to a single mushroom if that individual mushroom is greater than five pounds wet weight by itself per person in possession.

Approval for collection for non-scientific or non-commercial use may only occur following consideration of the questions and guidance for mushroom collecting presented in the Natural Resources Handbook. An affirmative answer to any of those questions must be mitigated before any mushroom collecting can be allowed. Conditions of approval are also presented in the Natural Resources Handbook.

19-3 The commenters provide feedback on Goal REC-1A and support multi-use trails. The comment is noted. Guidelines TRAIL-1A and INLAND-1G call for the preparation of a trails management plan. Such a plan will address trail potential and uses through out the entire unit. Identified trails and modes of use will be based on the ability of the resources to sustain the trail and respective use, recreational activities, and suitable

- access points. Multiple uses of trails shall be allowed where appropriate and compatible.
- 19-4 The commenters provide feedback on Goal EDU-1 and support hiring additional Department staff. The comment is noted; however, staffing is a budgetary item and not part of the General Plan.
- 19-5 The commenters provide feedback on Goal TRAIL-1 and would like Department staff to work with local community groups and non-profit organizations to develop a trail plan, establish trail priorities, and the build the trails. The comment is noted and the Department recognizes the value of input from community groups. The General Plan addresses this important resource in Goal COMM-1 and subsequent guidelines (pg 3-30). Please also refer to response to comment 12-1.
- 19-6 The commenters provide feedback on Goal ROAD-1 and suggest maintaining the existing logging roads. The comment is noted and proposals to deal with the existing logging road network will be included in the trails management planning process, including the future Trails Management Plan. Refer to Guidelines TRAIL-1A, TRAIL-1F, and ROAD-1A in the General Plan.
- 19-7 The commenters support Guideline EDU-1E. The comment is noted, and no further response is necessary.
- 19-8 The commenters suggest new text for the Carrington Ranch description.

 The Department recognizes that LandPaths has played a role in the cleanup,
 maintenance, and facilitating public use for the Carrington Property. Please refer to
 Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for the revised description fro the Carrington
 Ranch property.

David Keck General Plan Section CA Dept, of Parks and Recreation P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296

Dear Dave,

I'm writing to express my opposition to the proposed parking lot on Coleman Valley Rd. (CVR) in Occidental for the Willow Creek section of Sonoma Coast State Beach. The road is not appropriate for State Park access. I am a great lover of the State Park system, but believe that access should be designed smartly, and in a way that preserves the rural and wild nature of the areas which it seeks to protect. Access to the new addition to Sonoma State Beach should be limited to the areas where the roads are appropriate; for such traffic and where there is existing access. The entrance at Freezeout Flat is just off of Hwy 116 which is a major road and can accommodate the traffic, and certainly the same is true for the trail which enters from Shell Beach parking area on Hwy 1.

I moved onto Coleman Valley Rd. in 1995. We have already experienced significant increase in the traffic on the road as it has become more of a tourist destination — and much of this traffic is from people who know nothing of the considerations of life on this road. They drive exceedingly fast, endangering our children and livestock. The road is often shrouded in fog, and it is windy and narrow. We experience accidents on the road because people do not understand the wilderness quality of the area and subsequent dangers of the road. Motorists dump trash (and I mean lots of trash) along the road, which we in turn take the time and energy to clean up. Placing a (CVR) parking lot in literature and publicity will significantly increase traffic — estimated at 2 to 3 times the current level on weekends. All of these problems will only increase with the increase in traffic due to a new entry point to the State Park.

There are many other concerns which I have re the proposed parking area — vandalism and graffiti have come to our road in recent years. Placing a parking lot here will invite partying and the concurrent imputs it will bring. Not the least of which is the danger to those partiers — as I said, the road is very often dangerous — windy, narrow, without dividing lines, and in summer, often almost impassable with fog. This is an invitation to young people to come out and drink, and run off the road with dire consequences. Phase keep drivers where they will not endanger themselves, us as residents, or our animals and livestock.

Coleman Valley Rd. is one of the only roads through the coastal range within reach of the Bay Area that retains its rural quality. Increased traffic will change that and eventually lead to the need for a wider, more heavy duty road. This will result not only in the loss of our quality of life as residents and ranchers, but also in the loss of something very important to the public in general—a heritage of underdeveloped spaces and the primitive roads which travel through them.

Thank you for your consideration. Please keep access points to the park where they are appropriate -nn on Coleman Valley Rd.

Walter Strauss

18150 Coleman Valley Rd. Occidental, CA 95465 707,874,1211

REC VIII

Letter 20: Walter Strauss

No Date

20-1 The commenter opposes the proposed parking lot on Coleman Valley Road because of concerns about increased traffic, safety hazards, and increased trash and vandalism. The commenter is concerned the parking lot on Coleman Valley Road will lead to a "wider, more heavy duty road" and a loss of quality of life, and suggests Freezeout Flat off SR 115 and Shell Beach parking area off SR 1. The comment is noted, and the Department is also concerned about the safety aspects of park access and the general quality of the surrounding environment. Please refer to the General Plan section on "Roadway Access and Safety" (pg 3-20), which identifies the subsequent planning, studies, and evaluations that are to be conducted in determining the safety and appropriateness of establishing any new park access sites or routes. Also refer to General Plan section 3.3 "Management of Visitor Use Impacts" (pg 3-30), which establishes a method for evaluating and managing appropriate park visitor activity including any associated environmental impacts. Please also refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.

Dave Keck, General Plan Section California Department of Parks and Recreation Planning Division P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



February 20, 2007

Re: Sonoma Coast State Beach, Access to Willow Creek Area

Presented below are several reasons why Coleman Valley Road (CVR) is an inappropriate access to Willow Creek Area and should not be used to access a parking lot.

SAFETY:

The road CVR is narrow, winding road with many blind spots and is often covered in fog making it impossible to be safely driven by the public. It is generally unsafe for unfamiliar motorists who often drive in the middle of the road posing danger to on coming vehicles. This poses a hazard to the local community and a significant hazard to cyclists. The proposed access point on a climb on CVR is between a tight hairpin turn and is just at the bottom of a steep 18% climb, creating a very unsafe pullout location. Fire is an ever present threat in this remote and expansive grassland region, which can be sparked by cars parked illegally on dry grasses and by people smoking in the grasslands.

INTERFERENCE WITH WILDLIFE AND RANCHING

The access for people at the beach, from Highway 1 will require cars to drive about 6 miles inland on Coleman Valley Rd through open grassland used for ranching of the Colliss ranch. The wildlife including endangered badgers and burrowing owls which is often on the road will be threatened by the increased public presence and traffic on the road. The drivers will not be familiar with the very steep winding 1 mile climb, often in the fog, and will pose significant safety hazard to the livestock, residents and to the ranchers. Given that a large percentage of the money to pay for the Willow Creek land came from Sonoma County Open Space and Agriculture Preservation, it is significant that paradoxically, the Willow Creek access on CVR would lead to impairment of the ranching, and impair the scenic open space value of the region and be a detriment to the environment of wildlife. Lines of cars being drawn onto CVR by State Parks will be seen from miles away in the region because of the open space visibility of the land which is coastal prairie grasslands and is unforested. The permanent draw of cars onto CVR by State Parks will violate the mission statement and purpose of the Sonoma County Open Space which paid a significant portion of the approximately 15 million dollars for the Willow Creek property. The CVR region must be respected as one of the

most precious natural open space resources of Sonoma County. Alternative vehicle access to this region, by bicycle or by hiking is appropriate for CVR.

VIOLATION OF STATE PARKS MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation

CVR provides outstanding "high-quality outdoor recreation" as perhaps the best cycling road in Sonoma County. Riding the 9 mile CVR which generally has low traffic and only two intercepting roads to the ocean is perfect destination for cyclists making longer loops from Santa Rosa and the more highly populated demographic regions of the county. The road takes the cyclist from Occidental up a long climb with views of Mt St Helena across the valley, into redwood forest, through old farms and ranches, climbs steeply to Sugarloaf Mountain midway, then opens into rolling hills through coastal prairie for several miles with expansive views of the road winding below for miles ahead. Eventually CVR drops steeply on a winding narrow climb with the ocean views unparalleled by any other road in the county. At this steep descent, unfamiliar drivers on this unmarked road with virtually no shoulders become scared and often drive in the middle of the road, posing danger to cyclists. To underscore the significance of CV/R as an important outdoor recreation resource, this week the Tour of California bicycle race, currently the most prestigious and important bicycle races in the United States used CVR as part of its race coarse.

The use of CVR as an access road for State Parks will not "provide for the health" of cyclists and will not "provide protection for California state's natural and cultural resource", in fact it will destroy it. The fact of the matter is that the Willow Creek property is only a small part of the larger Sonoma Coast State Beach Park which was purchased with knowledge that it had poor access. It is a violation of the Mission Statement of the State Parks to destroy a more important natural, cultural and scenic resource to the State; i.e. CVR region and its current use for hiking, cycling and recreation, in order to provide unnecessary access to the Willow Creek Land, which can be accessed from major highways (Hwy 1 and 116) in two lower access points to Willow Creek.

THE IMPACT OF STATE PARKS ON A COUNTRY ROAD

The access will disproportionately increase cars, and larger park service vehicles, by an estimated 30 cars per hour on weekends, 2 to 3 times current level. This is an estimate based on several assumptions on numbers, which can be "tweaked", but the reality will not change much. First realize that the frequent article in Press Democrat, SF Chronicle, or TV Backroads of CA program telling the public that CVR is the most scenic road in Sonoma, has an impact for a few weekends by a spike increase in the number of cars on CVR, but then it dies down to normal. The arguments I have heard from certain park officials that you can't stop the effect of increased population, which in turn increases the number of cars on the road. But this isn't true for CVR because it does not serve to link any growing cities or urban populations. People try driving CVR road to the beach and realize they can get to the beach in less time and without the

21-1 (Cont) stressful driving on the narrow road by taking 116 or Bodega highway from Santa Rosa, bay area or Sacramento. The road name even is a misnomer referring to "Valley" and not drawing attention to it being in part a ridge top road. The growing population in Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Rohnert Park and elsewhere has not impacted this remote country road between Occidental, a small town, and Hwy 1 where there is no community.

State Parks would permanently advertise CVR as an access between different points in the park, highlighting on their maps the road, the parking access proposed on CVR. This would permanently increase the traffic on the road.

Estimate 4 million visitors to Sonoma State Coast Park per year (this could be off by a factor of two but the impact would still be severe), 1% of these visitors drive onto CV/R drawn by State Parks, and the majority of the people come on sunny weekends which is half the weekends per year, 25 weekends. Assume 2 people per car. Therefore 2 million cars x 1% = 20,000 additional cars per year on CVR. But the cars are not distributed throughout all days of the year, as perhaps commuter traffic would be, rather the majority comes on sunny weekends. Divide by 25 weekends and 2 days per weekend (50 days): 20,000 cars / 50 days = 4000 additional cars per day on CVR or sunny weekends. Divide by 12 hours = 330 cars each hour on CVR. Even if it were half this number 165 more cars per hour, this is an enormous impact on CVR on those sunny weekends when cyclists use the road, no less on the local community. At present the road is busy and dangerous with 20 cars per hour.

Whether it is 400 or 4000 more cars per day on CVR, the change will be permanent because State Parks will continue to draw people coming to the beaches up onto CVR. While the parking lot may only hold 6 to 8 cars, the excess cars will park along CVF: n the region of the access site and no less in other regions to picnic and take in views, parking on dry grasslands, posing serious danger of fire. The park access could easily lead to a doubling of cars on Coleman Vly Rd, and there are already too many cars on the sunny weekends.

SUMMARY

The scenic value of the road and region is a great heritage of our community, Sonoma County and no less the state of California. We should protect the last few remaining country roads by not permanently increasing their traffic. The increased cars will be a threat to the already endangered wildlife in this remote region of contiguous protected open space land. There are two access points in Lower Willow Creek which are from a major highway 116 and Hwy 1, which are designed to handle safely the increased traffic.

There are several trails in Willow Creek area that have great views and are appropriate for ADA access, whereas the CVR site is not appropriate for ADA access. It is nearly a mile to the most remote point, which is the only place where there is a distant view and the road has at least one steep climb. It is more appropriate for hiking, cycling and horse access to this most remote upper corner of the park. Putting picnic tables ar d cars at the top of a scenic wilderness hike is not only anticlimactic, but is detrimental to experiencing nature as a hiker.

21-1 (Cont) Coleman Viy Rd has open range cattle livestock, is narrow winding with poor visibility and is without central lines, and any additional traffic should not be encouraged by State Parks.

The proposed parking lot, (6 to 8 cars) is very small but will draw disproportionate excess cars onto CVR from the beach region. The cars drawn to the region will park on the roadside, illegally, creating fire and general safety hazard.

The parking area is extremely dry in the summer, is surrounded by trees, and is just above a community in the valley on CVR, miles from the nearest fire stations. The parking area and access on this remote region will create a severe fire hazard. With the dry grass in the region, the risk of fire is very high, and there have been devastating fires in the past.

The road is used for cycling road because of its low traffic and scenic nature. The Sonoma Coast State Park will be harming an established high quality recreational opportunity to the public. Lower Willow Creek Park will have access from Hwy 1 and Hwy 116 roads designed to handle the increased traffic and little impact. It is just a bad idea to use CVR. The rural community living on Coleman Valley Rd will be disrupted and made unsafe by additional public and traffic. The wildlife including golden eagles, badgers and burrowing owls, which are commonly seen on CVR, will be endangered by the increased public presence and traffic on the road. Given the mission statements of both California State Parks and Sonoma County Open Space District, which bought he land, the proposed parking lot access on CVR appears to be in violation of protecting the scenic value of the region and the safety and existing recreational use of this region.

Respectfully yours.

David Feinberg

22727 Coleman Valley Rd,

P.O. Box 876, Bodega Bay, CA, 94923

Enclosed: comments on Access Report.

An analysis of the access report shows many incorrect statements. Corrections on different sections of the report are given below. Overall, the report did not give a fair evaluation and was biased.

Table 2.0

Map: Showing a hand drawn "Lookout trail" from Coleman Valley Rd (CVR) site accessible from CVR when no other trails are shown in the map of the entire park region. The drawing of the "Lookout trail" on the map creates bias and should be removed or else other major trails and roads with views should be drawn onto the map in the same way. There are equally or greater extensive views of region from either Upper Willow Creek road or from Isle in the Sky trail from lower trail access points but these trails are not shown on the map. Other trails are suitable for ADA access. This shows an intrinsic bias over trail access and park access. More to this point, the Lookout trail is a continuation of the fire road which is accessible from Lower Willow Creek access which is not represented on the map, creating a misconception of limited access to this trail. Also, misteading is that Lookout trail has a panoramic view but it is only from the very last few hundred feet of the trail. There is no significant view from the remaining 99.9% of the trail as it is covered with trees and has some climbs. In contrast, the Upper Willow Creek road trail over a mile of trail with expansive views. The end of the Isle in the Sky trail has far more extensive views.

exterior connectivity: This section claims there is a double striped 2 lane road from the south boundary of CVR to the access point which is frankly not true. Only the first half mile is paved, and the remaining 3 miles of road to the proposed parking area is not marked. From Occidental, after this first half mile, CVR is a narrow unmarked road with tight, hairpin turns, many blind spots for 3 miles to the parking site. There are still flowers left in front of a tree, where a couple missed a turn and had a fatal crash into the tree. In this respect, the access report is irresponsible to the safety of the public and community.

Natural Resources.: they exclude the impact of the parking lot on CVR which will significantly and permanently increase the cars and noise effecting the residential area in the valley on the 3 miles of unmarked road they failed to mention. The no less dangerous 6 mile of driving from Hwy 1 to the access point will have lines of cars visible from distant regions since this is open space coastal prairre. Therefore, the park acess will have a permanent detrimental impact on the visual open space. There are often badgers, rare owls and big cats

Cultural R. no comment (N/C)

Permitting Issues N/C

Operational Suitability (convenience & limitations) If Salmon Creek Ranger Station becomes a hub, then CVR will be just a connection between two regions of the park and thus CVR will be treated as an itinerary within the park when actually CVR represents a distinct scenic, recreational resource and is the center of a rural community. The land is agricultural and residential and should not become a shortcut to get from one point in the park to the other. There is no need for park vehicles, trucks, to be on CVR if not for the proposed access point.

Other: "scattered rural residential property — this ignores ranching and fisherman, the economy and culture.

"minimal conflict with adjacent landowners" in contrast to other areas, this is not true, but rather shows how the evaluation is being influenced by more politically powerful communities of Upper Willow Creek which is largely professional residence and is being organized by Pruninski

and Chapham residents who are local professional environmental impact report writers. What has lead to this statement? This isn't objective nor accurate, given the petition the CVR Preservation Organization has written opposing parking lots and access to parks on the road due to the detriment to safety, open space and recreational activities on the road.

Sonoma State Beach Willow Cr Access Evaluation Table 1

Site Size CVR is 9000 SF, the smallest, others are 120,000 and 60,000 SF at Lower W. Creek and Freezeout Flat respectively, so their rational will be to use CVR for day hikers and rondevue pickup site, but this is not neccessary for most hikers who want to go on a long hike. It will be used for day hikers who want to picknic and will create a fire hazard and leave garbage.

Approach Rd width

CVR given 0 passing difficult, but actually it is negative — since passing is not possible when climbing on CVR up from Hwy 1 at slide area which can not be further improved without building a peered wall at millions of dollars.

Existing Intersection

CVR given + "existing intersection available" but the nearest intersection is with Joy Rd nearly 3 miles away and it is an extremely dangerous T intersection, then to the West it is Hwy 1, also dangerous. What are they talking about????

Location Suitability

-, needs further analysis?

Approach Grades CVR given 0 , "4 to 8% grade", which is incorrect. It is a 16-18% grade from the West. Below the proposed access point, the road goes through one of the most dangerous hairpin turns on CVR. The road is then narrow and climbs passed the access point where the road takes a slight bend and climbs very steeply, estimated 16-18% grade to the top of hill (Sugarloaf Mt). Vehicles and bicyclists descending the 16-18% grade would immediately encounter cars pulling out from the proposed access, which is very dangerous.

Approach Visibility/sight lines—given 0 minor modification needed, but from the 18% grade it is difficult to stop and in the fog it is very bad.

ENTRANCE

Entry Gradient

Width

Drainage Improvement agreed

Page 2 of Table 1

21-2 (Cont)

Responses to Comments

Sonoma Coast State Beach

Views

view Into eite, view of site are both minimal impact currently, except for the metal conduits which are very visable, it is likely that cars will be visible if the site is developed.

Scente view from site is given +, when in fact it should be a -, there is no panoramic view, only trees, this is a mistake or a snow job. The only view is a mile away at the end of a trail, no scenic view on the hiking trail as present elsewhere in the park.

slope gradient

drainage

hazard tree clearing -- What the report is proposing is to make improvements to CVR visibility and with signage, which inevitably always has the opposite effect of encouraging motorists to drive faster, creating even greater safety hazard.

Size -- "may not meet current needs, only minor improvements possible" certainly will not meet needs.

Page 3 of Table 1

Trail Access Potential, given +, The connection is to a very long fire road with no visibility for miles due to overgrown trees, and this road had been planned to be decommissioned in the initial park plan. There is no connectivity to trail system, and regardless, the trail system has not been defined, actually it was initially just dismantalled with no forethought.

21-2 (Cont)

Letter 21: David Feinberg

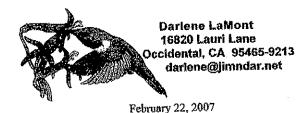
February 20, 2007

21-1 The commenter opposes using Coleman Valley Road as access to a parking lot because of safety concerns having to do with poor road conditions and fire hazards. The commenter feels the parking lot will interfere with wildlife, ranchers, and residents because of increased traffic, which would impair the scenic value of the area. The commenter feels the parking lot goes against the park's mission statement by increasing traffic on the road and thus decreasing usability by cyclists. The commenter feels traffic does not need to increase on Colman Valley Road because the road does not link any major areas. The commenter opposes advertising the road as an access point to the park. The commenter suggests using SR 1 and SR 116 to access Upper Willow Creek, and feels bicycle and hiker access would be appropriate. The comments are noted.

The Department is aware that there are many situations throughout the State Parks System where rural public roads similar to Coleman Valley Road provide park access. The road characteristics mentioned are typical of many State Park environments. The Department is concerned about public safety, as well as protecting wildlife. The stewardship responsibilities of State Parks are guided by the Public Resources Code and Department policies. The General Plan Sections on Resource Management (pg 3-8) and Administration and Operations (pg 3-20) discuss applications of park policy regarding wildlife and roads. In addition the State Parks practices adaptive management strategies (Section 3.3.2) to maintain environmental quality.

The State Park Mission Statement as described applies to the management and operation of State Park lands. Coleman Valley Road is a county facility outside the jurisdiction of State Parks. Nevertheless, State Parks fully intends to cooperate with local agencies in the management of park lands and lands surrounding the park. State Parks has no intention of destroying any resources within or adjacent to park lands. The General Plan does address the issue of community involvement and agency cooperation (pg. 3-29) as applicable to this park unit. Please also refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.

21-2 The commenter suggests several changes to be made to the Upper Willow Creek Access Site Evaluation. The comments are noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 – Public Access.



Ca Dept. of Parks and Recreation Planning Division P.O. Box 942896 Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Submission of Public Comment on the Sonoma Coast State Beach Preliminary General Plan

As a frequent user of the Sonoma Coast Beaches and the Willow Creek Unit for over the last 30 years, I am very concerned about the management and development of these parks. I was initially very pleased to see that Willow Creek would be included in the State Park system so I became directly involved as a docent, a contributor to Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, a trails planning committee member and an active member of trail maintenance crews through Stewards, LandPaths and State Parks.

State Parks should follow the example of organizations like the Marin County Open Space District, the Marin County Water District and the Nature Conservancy which manage a large amount of property with far less staff and bureaucratic red tape (like this General Plan) and more committed volunteers. They have numerous trails (some are fire roads, some are old logging roads, some are idyllic biking paths), lots of access points (many with limited parking on public streets) and they provide great trail maps of each site over the internet. Interpretive information is also available on the internet.

Internal decisions have already been made and this public comment period and earlier hearings and comment periods will bave little or no effect. The historic roads, sites and trails will continue to be destroyed as soon as funding is acquired. It is a pity that State Parks consistently fails to listen to the ideas and insights of the public, particularly that portion of the public who is committed enough to volunteer substantial time and money to a place like Willow Creek. State Parks gives us this platform to air our views, but does not hear. The issue of Pond Farm at Armstrong Woods is another example - from 1985 - of State Parks' deaf car. Funding is even more limited now - will State Parks continue pouring money into the pet projects of senior staff while crying poverty?

Through direct involvement I have come to understand that State Parks is a vast, unwieldy and dysfunctional bureaucracy that has no interest in the public or their opinions. Times have changed and State Parks can no longer afford to be an autonomous organization that runs parks FOR the public. State Parks needs to run parks WITH the public.

Sincerely,

Wartene Kallon

Letter 22: Darlene LaMont

February 22, 2007

22-1 The commenter is concerned about the management and development of Sonoma Coast SB and the Upper Willow Creek Unit and feels there should be less staff, more volunteers, and less bureaucratic red tape. The commenter feels that the Department does not listen to the public's opinions. The comments are noted. The Russian River District fully intends to follow all of the required planning, permitting, and CEQA guidelines throughout the process of making improvements within Sonoma Coast SB. Community involvement is addressed in the General Plan on page 2-29 and under Goal COMM-1 and subsequent guidelines.



Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Preservation through Education and Restoration Russian River Sector State Parks

RECEIVED

FEB 2 6 2007

HORTHERN SERVICE

February 22, 2007

California Department of Parks & Recreation Russian River District P.O. Box 123 Duncans Mills, CA 95430

Re: Comments regarding the Sonoma Coast General Plan and EIR

The Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods Board of Directors would like to submit the following recommendations, many of which will be in agreement with those submitted by the Sonoma Coast Advisory Committee (SCAC) in their communication dated 2/21/07.

Stewards is wholeheartedly in agreement that the description of our organization on page 2-104 does not adequately represent the work our organization has done since 1985, and continues to do to support Russian River District State Parks. We support the following change in wording:

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards)

Stewards is a nonprofit public benefit corporation that has been working in partnership with the Department to provide volunteer opportunities for Parks in the Russian River District, including Sonoma Coast SB since 1985. Ongoing programs include Seal Watch, Whale Watch, a visitor center in Jenner, tidepool education, watershed education in Willow Creek for adults and children, trail maintenance, water quality monitoring in the Willow Creek watershed, and beach cleanups. The Russian River District Volunteers in Parks program depends on Stewards to provide funding for educational and interpretive activities, resource management projects, and assistance with development of interpretive facilities. Stewards obtained funding for and managed development of the Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan and the Sustainable Channel Development in Lower Willow Creek, Sonoma County, California (Prunuske Chatham, Inc. 2005). Future projects in Sonoma Coast SB include continued planning and-implementation of restoration efforts in the Willow Creek watershed,

development of an Environmental Living Program for school children, the development of new trails and signage, ongoing docent-led outings, and the development of Mounted Assistance Units. Funding has been secured from the California State Coastal Conservancy to support many of these efforts.

23-1 (Cont)

Trails

Stewards is in support of the SCAC's recommendation that a new Guideline be included that mandates communication and cooperation be ongoing between State Parks and the community during the process of trail planning as a source of knowledge and traditional use. The Willow Creek Trails Committee, comprised State Park officials and members of various user groups and nonprofit organizations, that has been meeting during the past year has proved to be a valuable source of historic and current knowledge about the area in regards to trails and access. Stewards believes that multi-recreational use can be achieved successfully with input from all user groups keeping in mind the overall goal of protecting and restoring the natural resources in the Willow Creek watershed.

23-2

Stewards shares the SCAC's concern about the safety of bicyclists along Highway 1 at Sonoma Coast SB for over 20 years (DPR 1984), and we also recommend that this issue be considered during future planning. We support Guideline TRAIL-1C to coordinate development of a regional bicycle trail system and encourage State Parks, Caltrans, and others to cooperate in developing lower impact transportation modes and recreational opportunities.

Eco-friendly transportation options for transporting residents and tourists from Guerneville to Sonoma Coast are being considered by EcoRing, an organization that Stewards is affiliated with.

Roads/Access to Willow Creek

Stewards is in support of multiple access points to the new Willow Creek acquisition so as not to overburden any one area. Road repairs, taking in to consideration environmental impacts, will be needed to accommodate increases in traffic and large vehicles such as school buses and horse trailers.

Stewards is in agreement with the following statement as presented by the SCAC: The Committee supports Guideline ROAD-1H to conduct road and traffic studies for proposed access points for the Willow Creek watershed. However, the sample sites evaluated in Appendix G contain numerous impacts that are potentially significant (e.g., traffic and safety issues for increased vehicle usage of Willow Creek Road by RVs and horse trailers, erosion from construction of new trails, removal of mature redwoods and other trees, impacts to NSO habitat, impacts to wetlands, visual impacts from new parking areas and other facilities, potential for geologic instability, potential impacts to cultural resources, etc.). This is inconsistent with the finding of "less than significant" in Section 4.6.11 of the Environmental Impacts Analysis (p. 4-23) and Section XV(a) in the Environmental Checklist in Appendix C. The types of projects utilizing Willow Creek Road that are contemplated in Appendix G are certain to result in "an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system" and may "substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses." We support the implementation of management goals and guidelines, but such planning does not necessarily result in less than

	23-3
significant impacts, and such a finding, particularly utilizing Sonoma County traffic data from 1980 (p. 4-24), is inappropriate.	(Cont)
Cultural Resources Stewards is in the process of developing an Environmental Living Program for Sonoma Coast, which relies on the preservation of significant cultural resources. This new interpretive program will educate school children about the Native American, Russian, Ranching, and Logging eras. For this reason, Stewards is also in agreement with the following statement made by the SCAC. The Committee is in agreement with Goal CUL-1 to protect; maintain, and preserve significant prehistoric and historic resources within Sonoma Coast SB and its Guidelines. We recommend an additional Guideline to coordinate with resource specialists on the evaluation, protection, preservation, and management of historic resources such as Russian era occupation and historic family ranching. We recommend that Guidelines CUL-1A (develop an inventory, mapping system, and database for resources that may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register), CUL-1C (prepare and conduct surveys and inventories of cultural resources in areas subject to development, and CUL-1D (identify and evaluate cultural landscapes), and the recommended Guideline re potential historic restoration/interpretive sites be included in the bulleted list of plans and investigations on page ES-3 of the Executive Summary and anywhere else that such a list or discussion occurs in the document (e.g., ES-4).	23-4
Salmonid Habitat Restoration Stewards supports and recommends continued participation in the restoration of salmonid habitat by State Parks, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, the Coastal Conservancy, and other agencies.	23-5
Mammoth/Sunset Rocks During the past few years, Stewards has been a strong supporter of the work of State Park Archeologist, Breck Parkman. We have funded carbon-dating projects and have also begun a new interpretive program aimed at educating the public about these natural resources as well as protecting them from vandals. Stewards has been working with the climbing community and has their support in regards to the need for a higher level of security for this area. Stewards does recommend that State Parks enact and enforce a consistent policy in regards to use by those who are benefiting monetarily from climbing activities. We do not recommend issuance of permits to climb the southern Sunset Rock as it is fragile and needs protection.	23-6
Grazing in the Willow Creek Watershed The SCAC statement that there are many opinions regarding grazing in the Willow Creek watershed is very accurate. Stewards recommends that a Guideline be added to allow for further study to ascertain whether or not grazing would be of benefit in the watershed. Issues such as native grasses, fire suppression, and historic significance need to be examined. Stewards sees a benefit to having a well managed demonstration grazing operation in the Willow Creek watershed for interpretive and educational purposes.	23-7

3-85

Responses to Comments

Sonoma Coast State Beach Final EIR

Above all, it is recommended that State Parks come up with, and enforce, a consistent policy in the Russian River District in regards to grazing. Currently grazing is allowed on the Red Hillacquisition and at Fort Ross. It is understand that a long-term grazing management plan that does not put a strain on staff resources is required.

23-7 (Cont)

Global Warming

Stewards agrees with the following statement made by the SCAC in regards to global warming: Since the enactment of AB 32 in January of 2007, which codified that "global warming poses a serious threat to the economic well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment of California," a discussion of the potential effects of increased vehicular use by visitors along the coast should be included in the planning documentation for Sonoma Coast SB. Guideline ROAD-1E to coordinate with local organizations to maintain existing and advocate for additional public transportation is a good example of the spirit of the new global warming emissions reduction program. Development of lower impact transportation modes and recreational opportunities, as mentioned above in the Trails section, would be another.

23-8

We thank you for considering our recommendations and congratulate you on the completion of the Sonoma Coast General Plan.

Sincerely,

Michele Luna

Executive Director

Letter 23: Michele Luna, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

February 22, 2007

- 23-1 The commenters feel the description of Stewards on page 2-104 is insufficient and suggest text they prefer. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for revised text regarding the description of the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods.
- 23-2 The commenters recommend a new guideline mandating ongoing communication and cooperation between Sonoma State Park and the community regarding trail planning. They are also concerned about bicycle safety and support Guideline Trail-1C. The comments are noted. Community involvement is addressed in the General Plan on page 2-29 and under Goal COMM-1 and specifically Guideline COMM-1C, which calls for public input and review during planning phases of major facility development projects.
- 23-3 The commenters support having multiple access points to Upper Willow Creek, with road repairs taken into consideration. They also support Guideline ROAD-1H but are concerned about the potentially significant traffic and safety issues evaluated in Appendix G and feel the EIR inappropriately found them to be less-than-significant. The comments are noted. Please refer to Master Response 1 Public Access.
- 23-4 The commenters recommend a guideline calling for a resource specialist to coordinate with the park to evaluate, protect, preserve, and manage historic resources. The commenters also recommend the Guidelines CUL-1A, CUL-1C, CUL-1D, and the above recommended guideline be included in the plans and investigations on page ES-3 and wherever a similar list or discussion occurs in the document. The comments are noted. Please refer to the response to comment 12-3.
- The commenters support continued participation in the restoration of salmonid habitat. The comment is noted, and no further response is necessary.
- 23-6 The commenters recommend enacting and enforcing a policy for climbing use by those who are making money from climbing activities and do not recommend issuing permits allowing climbers on the southern Sunset Rock. The comment is noted. Please refer to the response to comment 17.1
- 23-7 The commenters suggest further study of grazing's affects and believes a grazing operation would be beneficial. The comment is noted. Please refer to Master Response 2 Grazing.
- 23-8 The commenters would like global warming to be addressed because of the increased traffic. The comment is noted. Please refer to Chapter 4, Changes to the General Plan, for expanded text to Guideline ROAD-1E and text of the new Guideline SUS-1C.

4 RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE GENERAL PLAN

This chapter contains recommended changes and modifications to the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report for Sonoma Coast State Beach made subsequent to its public release and the public review process. Changes that are a result of responses to comments detailed in Chapter 3 are presented in Section 4.1.

4.1 CHANGES FROM RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

PAGE ES-3, SUMMARY AND STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN:

The following three bullets will be added to the list.

- Develop an inventory, mapping system, and database for significant resources
- Consult with local Native Americans who have traditional ties to resources within Sonoma Coast SB
- Prepare and conduct surveys and inventories of cultural resources in areas subject to development

PAGE 1-3 – 1-4, SPIRIT OF THE PLACE, THIRD PARAGRAPH:

As <u>human use of</u> Sonoma Coast SB <u>increases</u>, it will be essential to continues its path in the modern era of leisure and preservation, the stewardship of the coastline is pivotal in maintaining a balance between a pristine vision of the Sonoma Coast as it once was naturally and an alterative extreme of a natural playground that it could be <u>maintain a balance</u> between preservation and protection of the natural wonders of Sonoma Coast SB and providing opportunities for people to experience and appreciate this unique place. Aesthetic quality, resource values, and recreational opportunities are inseparable characteristics that are the basis of attraction to Sonoma Coast SB. To preserve all three is to sustain the popularity of Sonoma Coast SB.

PAGE 2-104, STEWARDS OF THE COAST AND REDWOODS:

The Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods are a volunteer association that works in cooperation with the Department to provide interpretive programs and maintenance for parks in the North Bay and Mendocino Districts.

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards) is a nonprofit public benefit corporation that has been working in partnership with the Department since 1985 to provide volunteer opportunities for Parks in the Russian River District, including Sonoma Coast SB. Ongoing

programs include Seal Watch, Whale Watch, a visitor center in Jenner, tidepool education, watershed education in Willow Creek for adults and children, trail maintenance, water quality monitoring in the Willow Creek watershed, and beach cleanups. The Russian River District Volunteers in Parks program depends on Stewards to provide funding for educational and interpretive facilities. Stewards obtained funding for and managed development of the Willow Creek Watershed Management Plan and the Sustainable Channel Development in Lower Willow Creek, Sonoma County, California (Prunuske Chatham, Inc. 2005). Future projects in Sonoma Coast SB include continued planning and implementation of restoration efforts in the Willow Creek watershed, development of an Environmental Living Program for students, the development of new trails and signage, ongoing docent-led outings, and the development of Mounted Assistance Units. Funding has been secured from the California State Coastal Conservancy to support many of these efforts.

PAGE 2-106 – 2-107, ROADS AND TRAILS:

Road- and trail-related erosion and the integrity and stability of trails and roads at Sonoma Coast SB have been identified as major concerns. Beach access trails receive heavy use and are subject to the forces of coastal erosion. The level of maintenance necessary to maintain safe and sound conditions for these trails is greater than for most trails. The road leading to Goat Rock is built on a landslide and continues to erode, thus requiring continued maintenance in order to provide safe public access. SR 1 is experiencing erosion as it traverses the marine terraces north of Jenner. The Willow Creek Road, which provides access road to the maintenance yard at Willow Creek and two environmental camps, is a narrow road that experiences regular floods flooding and occasional slippages, on a regular basis and may cause adverse effects on the riparian habitat associated with Willow Creek. The road receives heavy use; however, it is not recommended for use by RVs and vehicles with trailers. Legacy logging roads in the upper Willow Creek watershed have been identified as a major concern for erosion and sediment delivery into the stream network (Prunuske Chatham, Inc. 2005). Erosion damage repair, erosion control and potential realignment of trails are addressed in the trails section of the General Plan.

PAGE 2-103, 2.2.2 REGIONAL PLANNING INFLUENCES

RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Russian River Watershed Adaptive Management Plan (WMP) is currently being prepared by the Russian River Watershed Council for the purpose of preventing further degradation and developing a healthy and sustainable Russian River watershed. The WMP will evaluate water quality, water quantity and the physical, hydrologic, and biological health and functions of the watershed. The WMP will provide measurable goals and recommendations to implement improvements and continue watershed assessment for the 50-year planning period (RRWC 2003).

WILLOW CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Willow Creek Watershed Management Plan (Prunuske Chatham, Inc. 2005) is a natural resource management plan that was developed in response to public and agency concerns for the future of the Willow Creek watershed. The four-year planning effort was completed in March 2005 as the State's acquisition of the Upper Willow Creek property was being completed. This partnership effort included two major landowners, the California Department of State Parks and Mendocino Redwoods Company (MRC), as well as the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, Prunuske Chatham Inc., Trout Unlimited, LandPaths, and members of the Technical Advisory Committee.

The purpose of the plan is to provide a comprehensive management plan to guide management and restoration activities for the recovery of the Willow Creek watershed, particularly its salmonid habitat. Goals identified for the watershed include:

Improve Habitat for Indigenous Wildlife Species
Increase Populations of Salmon and Steelhead to Sustainable Levels
Reduce Sediment Input into Willow Creek
Resolve Sedimentation Issues at the Second Bridge
Manage Vegetation for Habitat Diversity
Manage Recreation for Conservation of Natural Resources

The final "Willow Creek Watershed Management Plan" document can be viewed online at: http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/WC%20Plan%20Final.pdf
A hardcopy of the Plan is on file at the Department's District office.

SONOMA COUNTY LANDMARKS COMMISSION

The Landmarks Commission designates historic landmarks, reviews development proposals involving historic properties, and administers a historic resources preservation program for Sonoma County.

PAGE 2-111 – 2-112, PROTECTION OF ROCKS BELOW PEAKED HILL:

The rocks below Peaked Hill (known by local climbers as Sunset Rock or Sunset Boulders) are thought to be a significant paleontological site with prehistoric animal rubbings. It also is an uncontrolled publicly accessible rock-climbing area in Sonoma County and, as such, attracts significant use by climbers, whose use could lead to deterioration of the resource. Evaluation and final determination of significance should be made on the "Rubbing Rock" as a significant paloeontological feature. Once this is completed, the Department will determine the appropriate management treatment for protection of this feature. The evaluation of the potential dedication of the site as a Cultural Preserve is included in the General Plan.

PAGE 2-115, CARRINGTON PARCEL:

The 330-acre Carrington Parcel was recently added to Sonoma Coast SB. Integration of this property into Sonoma Coast SB, and potential management and use issues are addressed in the General Plan. The Sonoma County Landmarks Commission has identified a historic designation for the ranch structures on the site.

In 2003, the 335-acre Carrington Parcel was purchased by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (SCAPOSD) for transfer to the State as an addition to Sonoma Coast SB. At the time of preparation of the General Plan, the parcel was proceeding through the transfer process and negotiations regarding a SCAPOSD conservation easement on the parcel. When negotiations are completed, the property will be transferred to State Parks and be managed in accordance with the requirements of the conservation easement as well as the General Plan goals and guidelines.

Through a California Coastal Conservancy grant, a partnership comprised of SCAPOSD, the non-profit LandPaths, and State Parks have been working cooperatively to provide site cleanup, building security, planning, and public access for the parcel.

Integration of this property into Sonoma Coast SB, and potential management and use issues are addressed in the General Plan. The Sonoma County Landmarks Commission has identified a historic designation for the ranch structures on the site.

PAGE 3-11, VEGETATION MANAGEMENT:

Guideline NAT-1A: Inventory and monitor Sonoma Coast SB's natural resources including natural communities and special-status plants to document their distribution and abundance. This may be accomplished through maintenance or re-establishment of natural processes such as fire, flooding, and succession.

Guideline NAT-1B: Protect and restore natural areas in those areas where they will not recover in a reasonable timeframe if left untreated. This may be accomplished through maintenance or re-establishment of natural processes such as fire, flooding, and succession.

PAGE 3-22, ROADWAY ACCESS AND SAFETY:

Guideline ROAD-1E: Coordinate with Mendocino Transit Authority, Sonoma County Transit, and local organizations to maintain existing public bus services and consider providing additional public transportation to the primary attractions of Sonoma Coast SB with the intent of enhancing public transportation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

PAGE 3-23 - 3-24, PUBLIC SAFETY:

Goal SAFE-1: Provide facilities and services that contribute to the safety and convenience of visitors.

- ► Guideline SAFE-1A: Work with local communities, local districts and agencies, and State agencies to provide a unified delivery of services in response to structural and public safety emergencies, training and utilizing the expertise of all personnel.
- ► Guideline SAFE-1B: Evaluate signage informing visitor of riptides, undercurrent hazards, and other known hazards. Install or improve signage where appropriate and necessary.
- ► Guideline SAFE-1C: Continue to provide lifeguard services as feasible.
- ► Guideline SAFE-1D: Maintain trails in safe conditions where feasible and monitor for hazards. Close trails with unsafe conditions until improvements are completed.
- Guideline SAFE-1E: Coordinate with appropriate fire suppression agencies, such as the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), local fire departments, and volunteer fire organizations, to update the park's Wildfire Management Plan for the Park to include the Willow Creek area.

PAGE 3-13, WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT:

Guideline NAT-2J: Develop interpretive programs and facilities that inform visitors about the importance of protecting the diversity of native fauna at Sonoma Coast SB.

<u>Guideline NAT-2K:</u> Reduce and, where possible, eliminate wildlife access to human food and garbage by using wildlife-proof trash containers where appropriate in Sonoma Coast SB, including administration and residence areas.

PAGE 3-29, SUSTAINABILITY:

Goal SUST-1: Incorporate principles and practices of sustainability into the park's design, improvements, and maintenance and operations, and utilize adaptive management principles.

► Guideline SUST-1: To the extent feasible, consider sustainable practices in site design, construction, maintenance, and operations. Sustainable principles used in design and management emphasize environmental sensitivity in construction, the use of non-toxic materials and renewable resources, resource conservation, recycling, and energy efficiency.

- ► Guideline SUST-2: Programs such as LEEDs (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) should be consulted for development of facilities and site-related construction.
- ► Guideline SUST-3: Support public and alternative modes of transportation for visitors to Sonoma Coast SB to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, both locally and within the region.

PAGE 3-36 – 3-37, STATEMENT OF MANAGEMENT INTENT:

The inland watershed management zone will be managed to preserve and enhance the watershed as a natural open space while providing opportunities for appropriate and diverse Appropriate public access will be provided. Connectivity with recreational activities. surrounding regional open space, natural communities and habitats, as well as recreation networks will be encouraged. Natural resource programs, watershed rehabilitation programs, and on-going inventory programs will be continued. Cultural resource inventories and evaluations will be conducted for those areas intended for development or rehabilitation. Significant resources will be identified, protected, and incorporated into park interpretive programs as appropriate. Management or programs in this zone may involve partnerships with conservancies, open space organizations, interpretive associations, or other agencies. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (SCAPOSD) holds conservation easements on inland portions of the park including the Willow Creek, Redhill, and potentially Carrington areas. The Department fully intends to comply with any easements or encumbrances on State Park properties. This includes permitted and prohibited uses and activities.

PAGE 3-39, WATER QUALITY:

Guideline INLAND-2B: Support and implement the Willow Creek Watershed Management Plan in a manner that is consistent with this General Plan. Explore the feasibility of Watershed restoration treatments in Willow Creek, including may apply to stream, watershed, and logging roads for the purposes of maintaining and improving water quality. This Watershed restoration may include erosion control plans, in accordance with water quality requirements, for development involving excavation or other ground surface disturbances that would increase the potential for generating sediment-carrying runoff. The plan Watershed restoration may also include conversion or improvement of logging roads, with consideration of their potential historic significance. Storm-proofing of roads and establishment of vegetative buffers shall also be included to minimize stormwater runoff that can degrade water quality. Restoration plans would also addresses plans for management of grasslands and forests, and exotic species.

PAGE 5-6, REFERENCES:

Prunuske Chatham, Inc. 2005. Towards a Healthy Wildland Watershed: Willow Creek Watershed Management Plan. Occidental, CA. Prepared for Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods. Duncans Mills, CA. Available at

http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/WC%20Plan%20Final.pdf, also on file at the Department's District office.